United Nations A/55/PV.30

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

30th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 27 September 2000, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 10 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/55/1)

Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): As is his custom every year, the Secretary-General made it a point to include in his report on the work of the Organization his vision of the most important issues and problems facing the United Nations and the international community. I would like to pay tribute to the comprehensive nature of the report and to seize this opportunity to refer to several points that were raised in the report.

The Secretary-General has devoted a large part of this report to the situation in Africa. We welcome the increasing concern about Africa within the United Nations and its main bodies and agencies. We believe, however, that the gap remains very large between what the international community intends and pledges to do in order to prevent and settle the conflicts on the African continent, and the actual steps taken in assuming the collective responsibility to maintain international peace and security in Africa and to deal with the actual root causes of those conflicts, which have wreaked havoc on the political, economic and social infrastructures in that continent.

Concerning the Horn of Africa, Egypt looks forward to the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) so that a necessary political climate for confidence-building can be created between those two sister countries and the way paved to a peace agreement between them.

Egypt looks forward to renewed impetus on the part of the international community to promote efforts to establish peace in Somalia, particularly since we are now at a decisive phase that requires all the efforts of the international community.

As for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we hope that all the parties will create the necessary conditions for moving to the second phase of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and allow further progress towards the solution of this crisis.

The Egyptian delegation believes that the response of the United Nations to the present crisis in Sierra Leone will reflect the commitment of the international community to its responsibilities in Africa and will certainly affect directly the future role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security on the African continent. That is why we look forward to seeing the Organization expand the military component of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and to seeing the international community respect the embargo on illicit trafficking in diamonds, while contributing generously towards the efforts to reconstruct Sierra Leone and its national armed forces.

Concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations, the recommendations contained in the

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report of the Panel of experts set up by the Secretary-General to study those operations, under the chairmanship of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, form an important and natural part of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization this year. Egypt is fully aware of the importance of those recommendations and of their long-term effects on the performance of the international Organization in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security. We look forward to detailed discussions on the recommendations in the relevant committees of the General Assembly with other Member States in order to reach a consensus on the best approach to take.

In this respect, I should like to point out that the Member States contributing to the peacekeeping operations — and Egypt is one of them — should consider the reform of that particular area of the work of the United Nations as very important. We believe that United Nations peacekeeping operations should be effective from the point of view of timing, deployment and operational efficiency. We would prefer, if possible, that the United Nations carry out peacekeeping operations rather than arrangements that are not relevant to it. The United Nations continues to be the only legitimate international forum, accepted by all, for peoples to work through.

I should like to refer to the statement made by the Secretary-General concerning the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the world, and in sub-Saharan Africa in particular. The figures contained in the report and in reports of other United Nations agencies indicate that there is a very serious social dimension to the spread of that disease. I refer not only to the frightening rate at which it is spreading — it affects 25 per cent of the population in some States of the continent — but also to the fact that it is affecting people of middle age, which will have an impact on the future of society and threatens the development of the continent. That is why Egypt is particularly interested in convening a special session of the General Assembly to discuss the problem of AIDS in all its aspects. Our delegation participated effectively in the deliberations that preceded the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 54/283 concerning the convening of that special session, and made it a point also to become one of the co-sponsors of the resolution.

For that reason, Egypt calls on all delegations and States to display a spirit of cooperation for holding that special session as soon as possible in order to examine ways and means of pooling international resources to tackle that very serious disease.

As for the sanctions, we welcome the proposals submitted by the Secretary-General in his report, because they parallel what my delegation and others have repeatedly affirmed. We would like to stress the importance of assessing the effectiveness of those sanctions in order to discern whether they truly promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations and to take stock of their impact on targeted States at the regional and national levels.

We have often stressed the fact that sanctions should be an exceptional measure and a last resort, in conformity with Chapter VII of the Charter, and should be imposed only after all other means of peacefully settling conflicts have been exhausted, in accordance with Chapter VI. We stress also the fact that sanctions should be imposed in accordance with objective, open, fixed and agreed criteria and for a given period of time, so that they do not become eternal shackles.

We have often called attention to the negative side effects of sanctions applied under Chapter VII — be they on the people of the targeted State, or on third parties whose interests are closely linked to those of the State in question, particularly neighbouring countries. In this regard, we were very interested in what the Secretary-General said in his report about the need to re-examine the concept of sanctions, and we continue to call for the lifting of sanctions and for the application of the relevant Articles of the Charter, in particular Article 50.

We congratulate you, Sir, and your friendly country on your election to preside over this session. We are confident that your well-known expertise and capabilities will enhance and ensure its success. I again assure you of our delegation's cooperation to ensure the success of the session.

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for presenting us with his annual report on the work of the Organization.

The debate on what the international community should collectively do to address the concerns and issues before us comes at an opportune time, when our heads of State and Government have just concluded their Summit. We should now give effect to the

commitments they made in their Declaration. We should begin with our Organization itself.

There are two important elements in any reform of the United Nations: first, the restoration of the primacy of the General Assembly in United Nations affairs; and, secondly, making the Security Council more representative of the United Nations membership and more transparent in its working methods.

The General Assembly is, and should remain, the principal body in the United Nations for deliberation on issues of international concern. It is where the sovereign equality of nations finds full expression.

The reform of the United Nations would not be concluded without an effective reform of the Security Council. Its membership must reflect the increase both in numbers and diversity of the membership of the United Nations. Even more important, the Council's decision-making process must reflect the principle of the sovereign equality of all States, which is the cornerstone of the United Nations. While the Open-ended Working Group has made tremendous efforts to achieve Security Council reform, it must complete its work soon.

The United Nations must be given all the resources required to enhance its effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security. Emphasis should be placed on conflict prevention. At a time when United Nations resources are stretched to the limits, preventive diplomacy presents a more cost-effective option than peacekeeping, which some estimate would require $3 billion to $4 billion a year to maintain in the coming years. But for as long as conflicts continue to erupt the United Nations should strengthen its peacekeeping capacity. The Philippines will remain fully engaged in United Nations peacekeeping missions to the extent that its resources allow.

The United Nations should seriously consider the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel and support its constructive suggestions, which would improve United Nations peace operations. The United Nations must ensure that United Nations peace operations are adequately financed and supported by Member States.

The Philippines is concerned about the adverse impact of sanctions on innocent civilian populations. The United Nations should help eliminate these negative effects and call for periodic and regular reviews of existing sanction regimes. The Security Council should only impose sanctions that are "targeted" and "smart", so as to spare innocent civilian populations from unnecessary suffering.

The United Nations should continue to promote democracy and the rule of law in all the countries of the world. It should be committed to the consolidation of representative democracy as a system of government for all. Political pluralism balanced by good governance and the ethical discharge of public duties must form part of the United Nations core values. Democracy, the rule of law and the effective participation of citizens in all the nations of the world must be a rallying point for all the Members of the United Nations.

The United Nations should be relentless in the promotion of human rights around the world. The principle must be upheld that Governments should, first and foremost, safeguard and protect the fundamental rights of their citizens. Only an unwavering commitment by all to the promotion of human rights will prevent a recurrence of the humanitarian catastrophes witnessed in the last decade.

The United Nations Charter principles on the sovereign equality of all its Members and non-interference in the internal affairs of one another should continue to be upheld. Any armed intervention, no matter how justifiable, must be carried out only with the authority of the Security Council if a modicum of international order is to be maintained.

The General Assembly should make a concerted effort to respond to, if not totally eliminate, the menace of HIV/AIDS. The response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic requires cooperation, not competition, by all the relevant United Nations agencies and non-governmental bodies. It demands collective action by all.

The United Nations should make special efforts to address the critical problems of the African continent. A higher proportion of the populations of sub-Saharan Africa are affected by poverty than in any other region of the world. Africa is also affected by a high incidence of HIV/AIDS. These combined hardships are ravaging the region in a manner not seen anywhere else. Therefore, specific measures for debt cancellation, increased official development assistance, increased flows of foreign direct investment and

improved market access should be established specifically for Africa.

My delegation will continue to participate in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court. We view the discussions on the crime of aggression as having particular importance.

The Philippines supports the goal of preventing impunity and bringing perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity to the bar of justice. But we will continue to evaluate whether the Court would be an effective tool to achieve the goals set for it. My delegation will also look closely at how the Court will be financed. And we will continue our study of the critical issue of the Court's jurisdiction.

I join others in recognizing the success of the recently concluded year 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We welcome the outcome of this review, particularly the reaffirmation by the five permanent members of the Security Council of their nuclear disarmament obligations. However, we express our hopes for the early and meaningful implementation of these obligations.

While there are several established multilateral venues that deal with various aspects of the nuclear issue, it may be time to deal with it in a comprehensive and focused manner. I urge all of us to take charge of preserving our future and to support the proposal of the Secretary-General, contained in his millennium report, that consideration be given to convening a major international conference that would help identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers.

We support the proposal to hold an international conference in 2001 to address the issue of small arms proliferation. Excess weapons must be destroyed where they are found. Their easy movement must be curtailed. National arsenals should have only the weapons they need for legitimate self-defence.

At the same time, we should continue to strengthen the regime established by the landmine Convention. Even before its conclusion the Philippines, fully aware of the humanitarian consequences of the use of anti-personnel landmines, had already abandoned the use of these weapons. We call on all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention. The Philippines also supports all efforts at landmine clearance and victim rehabilitation.

We must ensure the success of the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries by convening an additional meeting of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee. We owe it to our brothers in Africa, in landlocked developing countries, in nations particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, in small island developing States and in my own region of Asia to dedicate ourselves to focus the world's interest on least developed countries.

We must also ensure the success of the High-Level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development. We must pay particular attention so that all stakeholders in the process develop a strong sense of ownership and together we can make the international financial system development-oriented and responsive to the needs of the majority of humanity.

We also cannot allow globalization to continue without giving developing countries a chance to catch up. We must not only bring about a more humane economic system, but must find means to bridge the digital divide that now separates the rich from the poor.

It must be stressed that for effective humanitarian assistance to continue the political will to provide the necessary resources, including financial resources, must be present. Moreover, protection of humanitarian relief workers must be assured. We pay tribute to the many men and women who have lost their lives, and those who, in spite of serious danger, are willing to sacrifice theirs to bring relief and assistance to unfortunate fellow men.

The declarations and further actions agreed upon at the special sessions to review progress in the commitments made in Beijing and Copenhagen to empower women and achieve social development, respectively, are testimony to the firm determination of the international community to achieve social development and improve the status of women. What is essential now is to put these commitments into action so that the goals set in Copenhagen and Beijing may be achieved.

The Philippines welcomes the attention given in the Secretary-General's report to the problem of trafficking in human beings, particularly women and

girls, as a priority area that must be addressed. In a related sense, the Philippines will be introducing an updated draft resolution that will incorporate commitments made in the special session of the Beijing +5 review.

Finally, as we can see, there is much to be done. I am confident that together we will succeed.

Mr. Kim Chang Guk (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like first to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for submitting the report on the work of the Organization to the Assembly at the current session. It provides us with comparatively detailed information on the activities of the United Nations relating to international peace and security, development, human rights and other fields during the period under review. On the basis of the report, I would like to present the following views.

On the threshold of the new century, the first and foremost task facing the United Nations is to establish just international relations based on the principles of respect for the sovereignty of Member States and non-interference in others' internal affairs.

The new concept of "humanitarian intervention" which emerged soon after the strike on Yugoslavia last year gives rise to serious concern among many countries as a grave challenge to the supreme principle of respect for sovereignty that should be observed in international relations. This concept of "humanitarian intervention" is based on the notion that power is almighty and therefore, if this is allowed, it will convert present relations into ones in which the strong wield their power against the weak.

In countries whose sovereignty is being encroached upon, a large number of people are forced to live an insecure and miserable life, deprived of the fundamental right to survival, and the situation in neighbouring regions remains unstable. This indicates that if a State's sovereignty is infringed upon, no country can safeguard the dignity of its nation or achieve economic and social development; furthermore, international peace and security will be endangered. There will be no justification whatsoever for so-called "humanitarian intervention" that infringes upon sovereignty.

Like big developed countries, the developing countries also highly value their sovereignty. Respect for a State's sovereignty constitutes a cornerstone of international relations. In this regard, my delegation positively notes that the principles of respect for sovereign equality, non-interference in others' internal affairs and political independence have been reaffirmed in the Millennium Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit. We hold that these principles should be observed in international relations of the new century and future activities of the United Nations.

Another important task facing the United Nations in the new century is to take practical measures to enable countries to benefit equally from globalization. There has been a series of discussions on challenges to globalization in the international arena — most recently, during the Millennium Summit and the general debate. However, we have not yet achieved a common understanding of the concept of globalization. As a result, countries have divergent views and arguments on globalization.

It can be said that several years have passed since the globalization process seemed to start. Nevertheless, only a few countries, particularly the developed countries, are benefiting from it, while the overall economic and social situation of the developing countries is further deteriorating. The reality shows that the globalization process, based on the international economic relations favourable only for the developed countries, is aggravating poverty in the developing countries and widening disparities between the rich and the poor countries.

This is the conclusion we can draw from the globalization process so far, as we enter the twenty-first century. In order to make globalization really benefit all countries, new international economic relations favourable for both the developed and the developing countries should be established, through practical measures conducive to the economic development of the developing countries, such as reforming the loan policies of international financial institutions and introducing equitable international trade regimes. Their realization requires political will on the part of the developed countries.

For the United Nations to carry out those tasks, its functions and role should be decisively enhanced. What is important here is to enable the General Assembly, the major deliberative organ of the United Nations, to play a central role in considering and deciding on all matters that are brought to its attention. As we are well aware, the General Assembly is the

most representative, democratic and authoritative organ of the United Nations, and it has the mandates to discuss any issues, ranging from international peace and security to economic and social development and so forth. That notwithstanding, at present the General Assembly is not able to carry out its mandate under the Charter and continues to be marginalized in the decision-making process. This means that, in the United Nations, crucial issues are being decided upon in other organs with limited membership. In order to address that negative practice, the General Assembly's role should be enhanced to enable it to discuss important issues relating to international peace and security. In particular, a system should be established which empowers the General Assembly to approve resolutions of the Security Council relating to the use of force or to the imposition of sanctions. Security Council resolutions are adopted on behalf of the entire United Nations membership. It is therefore natural that the General Assembly, representing all countries, should exercise such a power.

It is also equally important to ensure that United Nations resolutions concerning economic and social development be fully implemented. Until now, we have not seen the full implementation of various resolutions calling for the democratization of the decision-making process of international financial institutions, the expansion of development assistance and the alleviation of the debt burden with a view to actively assisting the efforts of developing countries towards economic and social development. Consequently, the efforts of developing countries to achieve sustainable development have not produced the proper results, and the expectations placed in the United Nations are diminishing. In that regard, we take particular note of the fact that the central role of the General Assembly as the key deliberative and policy-making organ of the United Nations was reaffirmed in the Millennium Declaration, and we look forward to practical measures being taken to that end.

My delegation believes that those views should be fully taken into account in future United Nations activities, and we assure the Assembly that we will make an active effort to ensure the success of the present session.

Mr. Čalovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): As expected, the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/55/1) is informative and focused, and — which in our view is more important — contains many comments, suggestions and proposals. It gives us a good picture of the work of the Organization and of its priorities for the upcoming period. We have studied the report in parallel with the Secretary-General's millennium report (A/54/2000), entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century". The period that both reports review was and continues to be the most challenging of times for the Secretary-General and for the Organization. The main message of the reports is that, in spite of everything, the Organization remains indispensable, and that its organs have functioned satisfactorily.

The United Nations continues to influence global development and the global agenda. Its busiest bodies have been the Security Council and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Of course, the United Nations could have done more. We hope that the positive outcome of the Millennium Summit and of the present Millennium Assembly will stimulate the Organization to do more in the future in that direction — in accordance, of course, with the Charter.

I would like to take this opportunity to make a few comments on some of the issues dealt with in the Secretary-General's report. In the twenty-first century, the United Nations must become a more relevant organization than it was in the second half of the twentieth century. The principles of the Charter must be observed and respected by all States. International law must be respected also. Globalization should be managed, and the best — the only — place to agree on its management is the United Nations. The basis for that management should be the equality of nations and mutual respect among States, which can be achieved only through cooperation and integration, not through confrontation, the use of force or domination.

We have already left the period of confrontation behind us. The Organization should remain truly universal and of equal importance for all nations, large and small. We should resist most strongly the marginalization of the Organization, and we should uphold the position that only the United Nations can promote global integration for the benefit of all. Relations and cooperation among Member States, large and small, should be based on the principle of good-neighbourliness. Everybody should benefit from this cooperation. The number-one goal of humanity is to

eliminate poverty and injustice. That would prevent the eruption of world conflict.

To achieve all of that, and much more, we must have a United Nations that is relevant for this century. The Millennium Summit showed that this is possible. A careful study of the Secretary-General's report makes clear the same message. If that is correct, then the principal organs of the Organization should be reformed, and the present hesitation in that respect should be overcome. The Organization could be an effective engine of change and a leader in improved international relations and increased cooperation if it continues to reform itself, particularly its mechanisms and its principal organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

For some time, many delegations, including mine, have been concerned with the need to strengthen the role of the General Assembly, not at the expense of the other principal organs but on the basis of the provisions of the Charter. It is fair to say that the potential of the General Assembly is not being fully utilized. In essence, the Assembly works for only one and a half months a year. Because of that, a routine prevails in its work; if this continues, as is the case at present, the Assembly will further marginalize itself. Hence, in our view, a new arrangement for the work of the General Assembly is a necessity. The commitment undertaken by heads of State or Government at the Millennium Summit is of paramount importance in that respect and should be implemented. The heads of State or Government resolved

> "To reaffirm the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations, and to enable it to play that role effectively". (*resolution 55/2, para. 30*)

To realize that solemn commitment, we need a new arrangement for the work of the General Assembly. The Assembly cannot discharge its duty as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ under the present arrangement, with its one-and-a-half-month working schedule.

The time has come for the General Assembly to start functioning all year round, in the same way as national parliaments are functioning. If that happens, many sub-organs of the principal organs will become redundant. That will be of great importance for the participation in the work of the United Nations of the majority of Member States, which cannot afford huge missions in New York and cannot effectively participate in so many sub-organs and ad hoc working bodies.

The Secretary-General emphasizes in this year's report, as he did in last year's report, the importance and the usefulness of prevention. We could not agree more with him. The Republic of Macedonia has had a very positive experience with prevention. It was the host of the first United Nations preventive peacekeeping force, a very successful undertaking of the United Nations. The Security Council did not establish a similar preventive peacekeeping force in other regions, in spite of the obvious necessity. This issue must be thoroughly examined when we review the Brahimi Panel report and when we consider the report of the Security Council. It must be clear at the beginning of this discussion that the establishment of United Nations preventive peacekeeping missions should be the main preoccupation of the Security Council and be part of the new arrangement for peacekeeping forces. The reputation of our Organization will be negatively affected if the Security Council continues to take action only after the eruption of war conflicts and continues to act like a fire brigade.

In the Secretary-General's report (A/55/1) substantial space is devoted to our Organization's humanitarian action and rightfully so. It is possible that in the future we will be faced with the need for even larger-scale humanitarian actions, owing to natural disasters, war or civil conflicts. Some are concerned that humanitarian efforts could be abused for political aims, or that the principle of sovereignty could be disregarded, or that humanitarian action could be undertaken that was contrary to the principles of the Charter. In our view, there is a need to clarify our Organization's position on this subject. We should not have problems when there is a necessity to help people in need and we should not hesitate to take the necessary humanitarian action. Respect for human rights and our obligation to help people in need should have no boundaries.

The region of my country, the Republic of Macedonia, is the Balkans or South-Eastern Europe, and it is mentioned in various chapters of the Secretary-General's report. It is true that it is a region burdened with many difficulties, owing mainly to the wars in parts of the former Yugoslavia, as well as to the situation in Kosovo. But taking everything into

account, we can state that the general situation in the region is improving. The main generator of that improvement is the "Europeanization" of the region and efforts for the region to become integrated into the Euro-structure as fully and as soon as possible. Of particular importance is the implementation of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and, of course, the success of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We are optimistic about the future of our region, but in order to reach a satisfactory situation, the involvement and the assistance of the international community is a necessity.

At this point I would like to end my statement by thanking the Secretary-General for providing us with such a useful and stimulating report, wishing him successes in the upcoming period. The Republic of Macedonia will continue its excellent cooperation with the Secretary-General and will not hesitate to give him its full support in his endeavours.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): Since I am speaking in the plenary for the first time, let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your well-deserved election to steer the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. With your consummate diplomatic skills and leadership, you are sure to guide the General Assembly successfully.

Human beings have traversed many millennia in their journey. No doubt, the change of a century and a millennium is significant; but we are cognizant that it is incidental to the calendars — which are many — that our societies observe. Yet, we must seize every opportunity that comes our way likely to be of service to our common humanity. Nepal is happy that the United Nations did so by organizing the Millennium Summit, which has, presumably, opened a new chapter in the history of both human beings and the United Nations.

It was a cause for exuberance that 147 heads of State and Government met at the Summit and mulled over ways for a better world for everyone. We now have the challenge to translate the vision of the Summit Declaration into concrete programmes and strategies to meet the goals the Summit has set for us. We are soberly reminded that, in the past, the pledges we all have made have remained unfulfilled. If we were to be serious this time, and Nepal hopes we all are, this Assembly is the point whence the process of implementing that vision in all earnestness must start.

Mr. Pradhan (Bhutan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As world leaders agreed at the Summit, we need a stronger and better-equipped United Nations playing a pivotal role in global affairs as the most representative and universal body to achieve shared goals in an increasingly multi-polar world; for we all — large and small, rich and poor — need the United Nations. We also try to contribute to improving the work of the Organization in our own ways and within our capacities. We feel pain when the Organization fails and rejoice when it succeeds. It is for that reason that the appreciation of the Organization's performance must be viewed in this perspective.

Let me now pay heartfelt tribute to Secretary-General Annan for trying through his untiring efforts to promote peace, stimulate development, foster the rule of law and strengthen the Organization. Under his leadership, the United Nations has become a forward-looking organization willing to take proactive steps and to reach out as necessary. The Secretary-General's annual report, entitled "Common Destiny, New Resolve", presents eloquently both what the Organization has been able to accomplish in the course of the past year and what still needs to be done to improve our common destiny through new resolve. In taking stock of the period under review, we find that the United Nations has had a mixed bag of successes and failures. Just as we celebrate its successes, we must also reflect on its failures.

The Organization's involvement in East Timor has meant the dawning of new hope for people there. People in Kosovo are building new lives and picking up the pieces of their shattered past. Many other trouble-stricken places also see the beacon that the Organization's engagement brings them. Today, 45,000 blue helmets and 13,000 civilian staff are busy keeping the peace and bringing succour to people's lives, more than at any other time in the post-cold-war era. However, much remains to be done to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The world has not become more peaceful, nor has it made progress in spreading to everyone around the world the benefits of globalization and the information revolution. Countries in Africa, Asia, Latin American and Europe are embroiled in unfortunate conflicts that

are now more internal in nature than inter-State in character. The arms race is moving at full-steam in many regions, thereby sapping States of the strength and resources that could otherwise be used to make a difference in their peoples' lives.

Globalization has unleashed opportunities for growth for some, and has brought burdens to others; more riches for some and more war for others. Globalization has not only created markets for the goods, services, capital and technology of rich countries, but it has also brought to the world crime, pollution, drugs, disease and refugees. Surely, great challenges to peace, prosperity and justice lie ahead for the United Nations.

Sadly for all of us, the Organization has not been able to live up to the mandate conferred upon it by the United Nations Charter, let alone up to the expectations of peoples. The reasons for that are two-fold: the membership has failed the United Nations, and the leadership has failed the peoples. We must work collectively to change that.

The Brahimi report is telling evidence that both the Security Council and the Secretariat failed the people of Rwanda and Srebrenica. The United Nations pulled out of those places just as simmering ethnic disputes were quickly sliding into disastrous conflicts that caused colossal loss of life, and at a time when people in those places needed a stronger United Nations presence. If the Security Council turned a blind eye to impending disaster, the Secretariat was unable to convince the Council to do what was needed to avert it.

Though it is making efforts, the world body has also not been able to make much of a dent in the problem of eliminating poverty and backwardness. We must not shift blame among each other. Rather, we should make a collective resolve to build a better common future.

On questions of peace and security, we appreciate the innovative efforts of the Secretary-General to bring on-board regional organizations in realizing common purposes. However, we must make sure that there is no conflict of interest and that the United Nations provides leadership and does not remain a mere spectator when actions are taken on its behalf. Neither should it let a pattern develop whereby it steps in when unilateral action is over. Preventive steps based on analytical information collected from different sources and independently verified would bring greater value for the United Nations money. The Brahimi report provides many useful recommendations, and needs to be examined thoroughly in order to make the best use of it.

Sanctions have adversely affected innocent people and innocent third countries. The United Nations must find a way to mitigate such effects and compensate innocent third countries.

There is no doubt that the withdrawal of gratis personnel has stripped the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of much-needed human resources. But that must not be used as an excuse for every failure of United Nations operations. We must find the way to remedy the situation in a manner acceptable to all and equitable to all.

We recall that an overwhelming number of statements at the Millennium Summit underlined the fact that poverty is the root cause of conflict. Hence, world leaders have also committed to a number of developmental goals. The United Nations must not let this renewed momentum fizzle out. It must take serious measures to facilitate delivery on the pledge the leaders have made to spark sustained growth, reduce poverty, preserve the environment and to tackle problems such as gender imbalances, illiteracy and disease, including the AIDS epidemic. We must ensure that the creative energies of peoples and the socially responsible private sector are unleashed by promoting market-friendly and innovative development. The United Nations must lead in coordinating activities with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and other international and regional bodies to foster synergy for speedy development.

Nepal applauds Secretary-General Annan for bringing Africa to the world's attention. Africa indeed needs attention commensurate with its problems, but so do other needy countries — in particular less developed and land-locked countries. What has struck my delegation the most about the report is the fact that there is no mention of certain major recent and future events. Such events include the South Summit and the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in which Africa and other regions facing similar problems have huge stakes. I hope I have not overlooked such references.

Development is an area in which the Organization can do much as a facilitator and catalyst. However, it

has been largely unable to deliver on that. It appears that the Organization is still losing more of its capacity, as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other bodies and units of the Organization fear being curtailed or even eliminated. We must come up with more imaginative solutions to our development funding problems at the high-level event next year, as well as at conferences of least developed and land-locked countries. In addition, we must work together to put the Organization back on a steady course as a catalyst for development and progress.

The protection of children and other vulnerable groups in conflicts and disasters, as well as the plight of refugees, are common concerns for us all. Nepal appreciates the efforts of the United Nations in these areas, in particular its efforts to help resolve refugee problems in many parts of the world, including the problem of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. An integrated approach to peacekeeping and human rights might help bring about synergy in the efforts of the Organization in this area.

Humanitarian intervention has become a major issue of late, and the Secretary-General's report expresses concern as to how another Rwanda can be averted. There is no doubt that we must not tolerate massacres in the name of sovereignty, nor should anyone be allowed to trample upon the sovereignty of any State in any other way than that provided for in the Charter of the United Nations.

The answer lies neither in intervention nor in letting massacres happen, but in efforts to prevent "gross and systematic violations" of human rights by addressing disputes before they turn into disasters, through political understanding and diplomacy. If we were to agree on intervention, the obvious question rises: for how long do we intervene? Intervention does not remove deep-seated hatred and animosity. Rather, we must tear down the walls of hatred, build bridges, and enhance social harmony through participatory governance, economic development, and distributive justice.

The United Nations has done much to improve its efficiency and pare down its costs. We support the Secretary-General in these efforts. But there is more that can be done to cut corners, to remove waste and to spruce up its performance. However, staff retrenchment alone — though essential where redundancy exists — will not suffice. We must overhaul the system. We must stop politically motivated recruitment and promotion linked with it. We must make the system more result-oriented, merit-based, yet representative and effective. We must streamline its headquarters and field offices, reform its financial rules and regulations; and equip it with the latest management techniques and technologies. These measures are essential if the United Nations is to be a force attuned to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Nepal appreciates the Secretary-General's efforts to reach out to the private sector and civil society. We would, however, like to echo the wise counsel of the former leader of one of our friendly countries: trust but verify. At the same time, we would also encourage the Secretariat to dedicate more of its time and resources to the core responsibilities for which it exists, rather than to peripheral activities that are helpful but not necessarily critical.

To conclude, my delegation commends and supports the Secretary-General for the good work he has been doing and for the leadership he has been providing. We also urge him to be more mindful of the needs and sensitivities of small and poor countries. Every country must feel connected and included; every concern of regional and global significance must find its proper place in the global agenda with which the United Nations is entrusted. Nepal is willing to do its part to move beyond mere supportive sentiments.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The recently concluded Millennium Summit places the debate on the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization at a very different level from that of previous years. We must recognize that more than 150 heads of State made statements on the main priorities to be dealt with by the international community in coming years.

Against this background, the Secretary-General has submitted an important report on the work of the Organization since the last General Assembly. In our opinion, the current report should be read within the general context established by the Millennium Report, "We the peoples", which reiterates many of the thoughts and questions that have given Mr. Kofi Annan the very extraordinary moral and political stature he enjoys today in the international community. The report offers us an opportunity to move forward in our thinking on the main themes being debated at this

General Assembly, thereby building the necessary convergence so that the United nations can carry out the mandates given to it by the heads of State.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share some thoughts abut three global aspects of the report that have special relevance for my country. The first aspect relates to global governance, and the questions of peacekeeping in particular, and the response to humanitarian disasters. As the Secretary-General so rightly has indicated, this is in the context of the international community's preferential concern for the rights of the individual.

We already know the huge risks for international peace — as well as for the prestige and credibility of this Organization — that have resulted from the humanitarian and political failures of recent years. We also know that these issues cover a variety of operations that are increasingly specialized and complicated, as well as increasingly interconnected among themselves. They involve the military, humanitarian, social and political spheres. What runs through them all, nonetheless, is a question that the Secretary-General raised in the Millennium Report, and this can be summed up as "the intervention dilemma".

As indicated in the report, it is relatively easy to condemn humanitarian disasters, massacres, massive violations of human rights and the racist ideology that underlies the systems of apartheid or the persecution of minorities. But we still do not know how to act when these events occur. This is why my country, aware of the difficulties resulting from the sensitive nature of this topic, welcomes with interest the invitation from Canada to join an independent commission on intervention and State sovereignty. This commission would explore the circumstances and the bases upon which the international community ought to intervene to help resolve intolerable humanitarian situations despite claims of national sovereignty.

It is clear that the problem is based on our ability to give the Organization greater legitimacy in its work. This implies, first of all, the reform of the Security Council, since it is mainly on the basis of the Council's decisions — expanded, participatory and transparent ones — that the international community can face the very difficult decisions required by the questions of governance in today's world.

Another fundamental aspect of global governance, separate from the aforementioned — and this should be discussed in and of itself — relates to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Secretary-General was quite right in requesting an independent panel of experts to submit a report on peacekeeping operations. Chile attaches particular importance to the Brahimi report and is studying its proposals carefully. Among these proposals, we find recommendations that could be adopted quickly, whereas others require a more cautious approach in order to build broad consensus. We understand, in any case, that the report requires political will and compliance, with the financial commitments of all, and particularly those who have assumed a decisive role in international affairs, towards this Organization.

Another aspect of governance relates to the promotion of development. It is obvious that the expectations of four decades of development have not been met and, accordingly, there is disappointment, which is starting to turn into alarm, not only in the poorest countries but also in many countries that believed that they had found the path to progress. The meetings of the financial institutions that are identified with the current international order are facing protests from sectors of civil society, and there are fears of growing reaction against globalization.

In fact, more and more people are rightly questioning the value of a civilization that sets the endless accumulation of profit as its primary goal at the expense of satisfying social needs. No one today is unaware of the fact that globalization creates enormous opportunities for those who can participate in it, but that it also further widens the gulf of inequality for those who are left out of this contemporary phenomenon.

We cannot fail to note that the protests have been directed not against the United Nations, but against specialized economic organizations. That may be because it is felt that the values and principles of the United Nations are to ensure that, along with growth, equity is preserved in the distribution of wealth at the national and global levels. It is also possible, however, that this is only a partial explanation and that there is another that is less comforting. Perhaps the protests have not reached the United Nations because, although we repeat year after year that development is at the centre of the Organization's work, our action is peripheral with respect to the major issues determining the nature of the international economic order.

We must not, of course, overlook the Organization's economic work, in particular the activities of the specialized agencies of the system, which do commendable work on multilateral assistance for development. We wonder, however, whether it is also effectively implementing its mandate and assuming its responsibility to promote development. We must recognize that, with a few exceptions, our influence on the world economic environment has been minor. This is simply because Member States have preferred to leave that task to other institutions.

The current situation demonstrates, however, that the promotion of development with equity cannot be relegated to mere technical discussion. The promotion of an international economic environment that is sensitive to the requirements of development — in particular, that of the developing countries and the most vulnerable individuals — is a political decision that requires broad consensus on the part of the international community. The only organization with the necessary political legitimacy to carry out this role is the United Nations.

The fundamental issue today is to decide, on the basis of our Charter mandate, how the United Nations can play a role in the great economic decisions that determine the international economic environment. This will require reform of the international financial and monetary system and the determination of the pace and selection of the sectors to be involved in the liberalization of international trade. As to the volume and characteristics of official development assistance and external debt relief and the implementation of this commitment jointly with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, we feel that a United Nations that is given a hearing in the consideration of important international economic affairs would be very useful in attaining the objectives of people-centred sustainable development, which is the common objective of all international economic institutions.

Its primary work in this area would be identifying world economic problems and heightening awareness of the need to address them, taking into account the requirements of development. In this context, we appreciate the Secretary-General's commitment to the success of the high-level international event on financing for development, which has been strengthened by the mandate that our heads of State gave him in the Millennium Declaration. The event, which we believe should be convened as a global conference, will be worthwhile if it responds to a resolute will to revitalize the role of the United Nations in promoting an international economic order that is sensitive to the values of justice and equity on which the Organization is based. It should also be capable of promoting concertation with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and other appropriate agencies and of moving forward in a spirit of renewed association for development among developed and developing countries.

The question of sustainable development, in particular the Rio +10 conference to be held in two years, is another issue that is related to the foregoing in several ways and is of particular concern to Chile. We share the Secretary-General's concern regarding the loss of visibility and political importance of the topic of sustainable development. The conference will offer an excellent opportunity to revitalize the subject, which is so important to future generations.

The recent information received on the shrinking of the ozone layer has direct bearing on Chile, since it is occurring in the Antarctic region. The expansion of dead zones in the oceans and the melting of the polar icecap are of great concern and require our immediate consideration.

The United Nations work in the promotion and protection of human rights is of vital importance to my delegation. As a country that has occasionally benefited from the Organization's work in this field, Chile agrees with the Secretary-General on the need to continue strengthening and reinforcing that work, in particular through the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, both in the area of civil and political rights and in the sphere of economic, social and cultural rights.

For Chile, the universality of human rights means the intrinsic dignity of all inhabitants of the planet as a whole. Neither the lack of development nor the special features of specific cultures can be invoked to justify any limitation on human rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

With regard to the advancement of women, intense and arduous work has been done to achieve recognition of their rights as inherent human rights. In this connection, what is both revealing and discouraging is the fact that, after the follow-up exercise of the Fourth World Conference on Women,

most commitments remain to be fulfilled. The report of the United Nations Population Fund entitled *The State of World Population 2000* offers discouraging commentary in this connection. It confirms that, unfortunately, there are still situations in which women are at a disadvantage and their most fundamental rights are violated. We should make the struggle to overcome this hurdle the basis of our work to comply with the commitment in the twenty-first century to integrate more than half of humankind into the full exercise and enjoyment of the human rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As a result of the Millennium Summit, there would appear to exist a new atmosphere of solidarity and a common attitude towards the great challenges we face on the changing international scene. However, one major task remains ahead. It will be necessary to determine whether we have not only the will, but also — and even more difficult — the political capacity to ensure that the United Nations can supply the great responses expected and required of us by our peoples, the common citizens from whom we have received our mandate.

Mr. Vento (Italy): The Secretary-General's report this year shapes a sweeping picture of the United Nations wide-ranging activities. At the close of the second millennium, the sheer volume of the United Nations activity provides tangible proof of the Organization's role as the universal guarantor of the highest aspirations in the areas of international peace and security, development and human rights.

Italy's deep belief in the United Nations ongoing vitality is reflected in the commitment and support we have constantly provided and intend to increase in the future. We do so not only as the fifth top contributor to the regular budget and the sixth top contributor to the peacekeeping budget, but also through national initiatives in the areas of debt relief, post-conflict reconstruction, response to natural catastrophes and our support for the United Nations food and agricultural institutions in Rome and other United Nations bodies headquartered in Italy.

The Secretary-General's summary of the past year's activities makes extensive reference to the Millennium Summit and to the related follow-up action. Italy welcomes the strong appeals made for a democratic reform of the Security Council aimed at making it more representative and effective. We are encouraged by the fact that only a very small minority of Member States expressed support for an increase in new national permanent seats.

Secondly, we all have to consider the recommendations of the Panel of experts chaired by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. The group sought concrete answers to the many questions raised by peacekeeping operations in recent months. Its report makes a technical rather than a political contribution and should therefore be submitted to the United Nations policy-making bodies, starting with the General Assembly, for an assessment of its political implications and practical feasibility.

Many of the proposals point to serious problems with the mandates, format and working procedures of peacekeeping operations. An in-depth study of these proposals is an urgent matter. The experience of a growing number of peacekeeping operations points to a critical need for a broader, more integrated vision of the three distinct stages of the maintenance of international peace and security, that is to say, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building. If lasting peace is to be achieved, these three stages are inseparable.

The tripling of the peacekeeping budget in the past year alone has entailed larger contributions from Member States. My country, for example, is being asked to increase its allotment of the previous year, with a contribution to the peacekeeping budget for the current year which will approach an estimated $110 million. As a matter of definition of our priorities, we would prefer to devote greater political capital, as well as greater material resources, to conflict prevention and to supporting countries with unstable social, civil and economic structures.

Another lesson to be learned from episodes in the recent past is the need for a better use and rationalizing of the structures we already have at our disposal. The United Nations Staff College in Turin plays a useful role, working closely with the Secretariat to hold training courses for hundreds of officials from United Nations departments, agencies and programmes. The Secretary-General's report postulates the expansion of its activities, while the debate that the General Assembly is about to initiate on improving United Nations peacekeeping structures will provide clearer guidance in this respect. Italy is ready to do its part and

contribute to the strengthening of the United Nations Staff College in Turin.

Emergency situations in the Balkans and Africa in particular have highlighted the fundamental support provided by the Brindisi Logistics Base, located at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, between the Balkans, the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. The Brindisi Base is playing an even greater role than originally expected. The most pressing short-term need of the Base is to replenish the stockpile of required materials. Both the Brahimi report and the Secretary-General make specific proposals in this regard that should not go unheeded.

A streamlined, more effective management of peace operations will demand a greater and more qualified commitment on all the subjects involved. As a follow-up to the report we expect from the Secretariat, the competent statutory organs will have to adopt the necessary measures, acting from a new perspective and with a renewed sense of determination. We need both the authorities of the General Assembly and the involvement of the Security Council.

Action by the United Nations alone will not be enough. A new sense of responsibility is required on the part of each and every Member State, in cooperation with regional organizations. It is only natural that the primary responsibility of the Security Council should extend beyond the moment of decision on individual, single peacekeeping missions and include direct support for the same. Stronger ties are needed between the policy and decision-making process, entrusted primarily to the Security Council members, and human and financial resources support for single missions, often provided by non-members of the Security Council. Moreover, troop-contributing countries should be given a greater say in the operations where they are fielding their own personnel. Thus the Brahimi report's recommendations in this regard deserve, in our view, a prominent place in our future discussions.

Peace and development are inextricably linked. The Secretary-General's report once again spells out his message clearly. In accordance with Articles 10 and 11 of the Charter, the General Assembly is the supreme governing body for all matters under United Nations competence, to which, in fact, the Security Council provides accounts of its activities, pursuant to Article 15. At the same time, the General Assembly must be placed in a position allowing it to address with vision and effectiveness its political, legal, social and economic responsibilities. In the latter sector it is assisted by the United Nations body entrusted by the Charter with the handling of economic and social affairs, the Economic and Social Council.

The General Assembly can carry out these functions either directly or by stimulating the commitment of other international players. In the past two years, laudable efforts have been made to promote synergy with the main non-governmental partners, starting with the heads of national parliaments and business leaders, who must become increasingly aware of their social responsibilities in the area of solidarity.

In this instance, this year's report could have dwelt at greater length on the renewed authority and initiative of the Economic and Social Council, particularly in the coordination of its work with that of the Bretton Woods institutions. The economic, health and security difficulties that still plague various regions of the world can be addressed with better prospects for success if existing United Nations instruments are fully utilized.

Of course, efforts to foster development must be complemented by Member States' commitment and their prompt, targeted development assistance initiatives. In view of our deeply felt perception that servicing their foreign debt represents an unjust burden for many countries, Italy has decided to cancel over $6 billion in trade and assistance credits over three budgetary years. That is why we are glad to learn that in the current meetings in Prague the international financial institutions are increasingly moving along these same lines highlighted by the Italian initiatives.

At the turn of the century, we are living an extraordinary moment in international relations characterized by extraordinary changes and extraordinary problems, but also by extraordinary possibilities that can be realized only through strong political will.

Confronted with the contrast between the new challenges of globalization and age-old threats, the world today is demanding greater justice for all, a justice that translates not only into growing efficiency and transparency in United Nations bodies and procedures, but also into institutional reforms that give visible testimony to the commitment of Member States to common and deeply shared objectives and values.

The adoption of the Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998 and the preparatory work for its establishment are the most significant recent developments in this direction.

It is Italy's hope that the Secretary-General's appeal for prompt ratification of the Statute and the urgent entry into force of the Court will receive a positive and attentive response from all Member States.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(spoke in Arabic)*: My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization for this year. This report clarifies once again the efforts made by the United Nations to face international challenges in different fields, and details the Organization's contributions to bringing about peace. Furthermore, it includes a comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations and provides recommendations aimed at helping the Organization to undertake such activities in a better manner in the future.

This discussion every year provides us with an occasion to make our remarks and state our positions regarding the content of the annual report on the work of the Organization. In this framework, we share the Secretary-General's concerns expressed at the beginning of the report regarding the eruption of new conflicts in many parts of the world during the past year and the continuation of many other longstanding conflicts that continue to defy the many intensive efforts by the Secretary-General and other mediators to find solutions. In addition, we are pleased by the observation in another part of the report that the realization of peace remains the United Nations first and foremost objective. This is clearly shown by the extensive coverage of the efforts made to resolve disputes, particularly in Africa.

In this context, my delegation commends the United Nations for the assistance it has provided to African endeavours. We believe that Africa needs more support in order to put an end to the remaining conflicts and to prevent the emergence of future crises that might scuttle current achievements. We believe that the real problems of Africa can be dealt with only through a comprehensive approach that takes into account African priorities. Supporting the initiatives of African leaders and adopting the conclusions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) are needed to put an end to old conflicts and to mobilize international efforts to bring about peace.

Africa fully recognizes that it has to face its own challenges and undertake its own development. But international cooperation in this area is still a major element. Africa cannot achieve sustainable development or succeed in eradicating poverty — which the Secretary-General repeatedly describes as the most important challenge facing the African continent — unless we deal with Africa's foreign debt burden, which amounts to more than $350 billion. Africa needs an international programme to eradicate malaria and HIV/AIDS, which is currently devastating 24 African countries. My delegation, which appreciates the will expressed by the heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit, hopes that serious programmes to combat HIV/AIDS will be implemented. We hope that as part of this overall effort, the initiative to provide drugs at affordable prices will also be implemented.

We appreciate the Secretary-General's effort to put the needs of Africa on the list of priorities of the United Nations development cluster. We call on the United Nations and its specialized agencies to undertake studies on how to promote local manufacturing that makes use of African raw materials and to set up programmes to develop the airports and seaports of the continent. Despite the pledges that the international community has made to help Africa, we must say that Africa needs more concrete actions than mere pledges and eloquent speeches.

The Secretary-General's report shows the negative impact of sanctions on civilians and on neighbouring States. For us, embargoes are not just a source of concern, but also a method to be rejected, since embargoes and sanctions are imposed as a means for exacting revenge. This is the case with the embargo against my country, for instance, where because of suspicion against two individuals — suspicion for which there was no evidence — unjust sanctions were imposed on all segments of the Libyan people. The financial losses due to these embargoes run in the millions of dollars. What is worse is that the United States of America used the period since the collapse of the international balance of power to call on the Security Council to impose sanctions on Libya. Moreover, the United States of America is now preventing the Security Council from adopting a draft resolution to completely lift these sanctions.

I would like to point out that the United States of America is calling for payment of compensation for the victims of Pan Am Flight 103 before the court has reached a judgement concerning this matter. This trashes the legal principle that the defendant is innocent until proven guilty. It also ignores the call of most members of the international community to lift the sanctions against Libya after it had fully complied with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council regarding the Lockerbie accident. In addition, it ignores the Secretary-General's report of June of last year, in which he emphasized that my country has complied fully with all the resolutions of the Security Council concerning this incident.

We agree that the Secretary-General's vision of disarmament is one of the most important elements of the United Nations strategy for the maintenance of international peace and security. On this basis, my country is now a party to most of the international conventions in this field, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

But we must say here that a number of international conventions in this field still need to be reviewed and made more acceptable. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), for example, does not fulfil the aspirations of the people of the world to the eradication of all nuclear weapons throughout the world. The CTBT does not establish a time-frame for the abolition of nuclear weapons arsenals, which are the monopoly of just a few countries. In fact the CTBT affirms the status quo and dashes the aspirations of the people to free the world from the horror of nuclear weapons.

The fact that we share the concerns of the entire international community regarding disarmament does not mean that we ignore the issue of anti-personnel landmines that are only defensive in nature. We believe that the people of the world should concentrate on the destruction of chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missiles, not just on landmines, which are the simplest form of weapons.

We note the optimism expressed by the Secretary-General in his report regarding pledges by nuclear-weapon States to fully do away with their nuclear arsenals. What is required are effective measures in this field. Talking about destroying nuclear weapons without actually doing that is merely an attempt to deceive the peoples of the world.

The report of the Secretary-General reviews the agreements reached concerning the implementation of the Statute of the International Criminal Court. My country — which has shown its support for the enforcement of international law by acceding to all the international conventions that aim at combating crime — believes that there is a need to take additional measures to establish international regimes to deal with those who commit serious crimes. The present Statute of the International Criminal Court is designed to judge the weak only. We call for its amendment so as to guarantee that all perpetrators of acts of aggression and all drug smugglers and other criminals are brought to justice. The United Nations has attached special importance to international law, and the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/1) clearly shows the activities of the Organization in this field. My delegation would like to express its satisfaction regarding United Nations activities in this field.

Even though the international community has repeatedly called for the respect of international law, this has not been fully accepted and implemented. We believe that a specific country continues to stipulate coercive laws and to apply such laws to companies, countries and individuals of other countries. The Helms-Burton Act and the D'Amato-Kennedy Act are examples of this. Now, as we enter a new millennium in which international norms should be strengthened, we believe that it is important that the international community should exert pressure to abolish such laws since they undermine the noble principles consecrated in the United Nations Charter.

Finally, we would like to commend the Secretary-General for the reforms in human resources in this Organization. We hope these efforts will continue to create an equitable geographical distribution of jobs and to reflect complete clarity and transparency when such jobs are announced.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Speaking for the first time during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, I would like immediately to express to the President my congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly, which this year is known as the Millennium Assembly.

The moment is unique and symbolic, and we are all familiar with the force of symbols, which, in the course of history, has enabled mankind to lay the bases

for a better future. We are here today precisely in order to lay the foundations for common action and for collective action in the spirit of a contract of solidarity and in order to build together the twenty-first century.

We are happy to see that the presidency of this session, which represents a decisive phase in the future of humanity, has been entrusted to such certain, informed and expert hands as those of our President.

I would also like to express to his predecessor our great appreciation for the high-quality work he carried out throughout the fifty-fourth session. In particular we are thinking of the methodical preparation for the Millennium Summit, which greatly facilitated the course and the results produced.

Let us not beat around the bush: he followed the royal path of excellence laid out by his illustrious African predecessors:, Alex Quaison-Sackey, Mongi Slim, Angie Brooks, Bouteflika and others.

We also wish to express to the Secretary-General how much we welcome his excellent reports submitted to the current Millennium Assembly, one of which was devoted to the role of the United Nations during the twenty-first century (A/54/2000) and the other to the work of the Organization (A/55/1), the one we are currently considering today.

The problems that we are facing are identified in this report on the work of the Organization. Solutions are outlined. What remains is to act. Action is required urgently, for time is of the essence.

All delegations have asserted this a few days ago. We have lived through an unprecedented event in history: the gathering of nearly 150 heads of State and Government. The conclusions of these historic meetings reflect the fact that all peoples of the world greatly aspire to peace and justice, to sustainable human development and to the reaffirmation of certain values which humanity shares, values without which, to speak like the poet, "the earth would no longer be the earth".

On the occasion of this Millennium Assembly, the international community displayed its confidence in our common future, facing the many challenges which it is confronting and will confront in the century which is dawning. Cameroon is particularly happy that the central role of the United Nations and its ideals were clearly reaffirmed, but President Paul Biya added on 7 September from this rostrum:

> "In truth our world needs ethics. As a set of moral values, ethics constitute an essential expectation on the part of the entire human community as a whole."

Indeed it is through ethics that we will restore the individual to the centre of our efforts. It is through ethics that our decisions and deliberations will acquire new dimensions. This is why we would like to reiterate the proposal made by President Paul Biya for the establishment within the Secretariat of the United Nations of a committee, or an international observatory, on ethics to promote among nations and within nations universal and fundamental human values.

It is undeniable that in a half-century of existence the United Nations can be credited with many achievements in the promotion of peace, human rights and development. However, the work is far from over — quite the contrary. The Secretary-General notes this in his report. New challenges are taking shape on the horizon, and each day they confirm the need for radical reform of the United Nations in order for it to become an effective tool in the service of peoples.

At the same time, we have to make sure that the role of the General Assembly is preserved. At the same time, we also want the composition of the Security Council to be reviewed with a view to its enlargement, so as to ensure that there is much more equitable representation that would take into account the changes in the world.

The persistence of areas of tension and conflict in the world, and in particular in Africa, and the lessons from recent involvements of the United Nations in the cause of peace require the urgent adoption of adequate measures and the necessary resources in order to carry out truly effective peacekeeping operations.

In that connection, my country welcomes and supports the conclusions and recommendations of the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. In our opinion, implementing those recommendations would give the United Nations a real capacity to take action where "blue helmets" are deployed. United Nations forces must, in particular, consistently be given clear mandates and sufficient means to ensure the protection of civilians. My delegation will return to this matter when the Assembly considers the Brahimi report and analyses its recommendations.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations to promote peace should be developed and encouraged. Here, it is important that the operational capacities of those organizations be strengthened to take full advantage of their proximity to the environment in which a conflict is taking place and of their familiarity with it. In that context, it is important to welcome the unflagging support of the United Nations and of the international community as a whole for the efforts being made by the countries of Central Africa to acquire a subregional system for the prevention and management of armed conflict and crisis. It is worth recalling that such efforts recently led to the creation of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), which is supported by a Central African multinational force. The purpose of the force is to carry out missions to maintain, restore and build peace. The countries of Central Africa hope that the international community will actively support the implementation of these mechanisms to enable them fully to play their role and to make it possible for the peoples of the subregion to emerge from the spiral of war, violence, lack of security and fear in which they have been trapped for so many years.

Beyond efforts to put an end to hostilities, there is an urgent need to prevent conflicts by addressing their root causes. That will be one of the major challenges for the United Nations in the twenty-first century. It is worth recalling the popular adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Here, the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons is a matter for grave concern. Besides exacerbating violent and murderous conflicts, that trade undermines the security, stability and development of affected countries. The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, scheduled for 2001, should lead to the adoption of a national, regional and international plan of action to help in effectively combating this scourge, which too often undermines peace processes and post-conflict peace-building.

A number of other speakers have mentioned the need for conflict prevention, because unfortunately a very high human and material cost attaches to conflict settlement. That is why my country strongly favours a more resolute commitment by the United Nations to promote a culture of peace. Here again, we will have an opportunity to return to this subject later in the session.

Another cause of conflict for which it is important to mobilize the efforts of the United Nations and of the international community is poverty. Combating poverty should be the top priority for the United Nations. This necessarily requires a just and equitable solution to the problem of indebtedness, which is stifling the countries of the third world and dooming their development efforts to failure. Here again, we should call upon the rich countries for greater solidarity. A number of commendable efforts have, of course, been made in this sphere, such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative. But decisive steps are still needed to genuinely restore the development prospects of the many countries whose meagre resources continue to be sucked into the vortex of debt servicing. The rich countries must manifest the necessary political will and solidarity. Such solidarity should be based on a clear-sighted perception of the interdependence of countries, regions and peoples. It should also be reflected with respect to development assistance. Here, a troubling trend towards fatigue is emerging, while new challenges to humanity demand greater development assistance.

The inexorable progress of AIDS threatens the annihilation of entire nations and societies; the fight against that disease should mobilize the efforts of the international community and of the United Nations. The report of the Secretary-General reminds us in a troubling way that AIDS is now killing four times as many people in Africa each year as the continent's armed conflicts. The Security Council's January 2000 debate on this subject was one encouraging sign of a growing awareness of what is at stake in this terrifying pandemic, which has become a grave threat to international stability. That is why my country, following the recent thirteenth International AIDS Conference, held in South Africa, calls for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Globalization, another topic addressed in the Secretary-General's report, is another of the major challenges for the future, when the United Nations must demonstrate an ability to adapt to change. There is a striking contrast between the technological advancement of a portion of humanity and the dire poverty of the rest. The United Nations is duty-bound to play a role in ensuring that the benefits of

globalization are enjoyed by all peoples rather than being limited to a small group.

In the same spirit, we consider it important that the international financial structures be reformed. International Monetary Fund and World Bank programmes for developing countries should be adapted in the light of our discussions here in the General Assembly. This is an opportunity for us to tell the Assembly of Cameroon's full support for the Secretary-General's proposals concerning international partnership.

Cameroon welcomes and encourages all change directed towards peace and conflict resolution, throughout the world. My country remains convinced that the promotion of the rule of law and respect for human rights is an invaluable contribution to strengthening international peace and security. This strong conviction is the basis of our commitment to democracy and our deliberate choice of a legal settlement of Cameroon's dispute with Nigeria over the land and sea border.

Finally, Cameroon will continue to make its contribution to the United Nations peace efforts by making available, to the extent possible, its human, material and financial resources to those missions and operations.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): Our delegation has examined the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization. We would like to express to him our appreciation for all his efforts in assuming the enormous responsibility of managing the work of the Organization and its actions based on the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, thus enabling the Organization to assume its important role in achieving international peace and security and cooperation among Member States in the economic and social areas.

Concerning the establishment of peace and security, we note that in paragraph 31 the Secretary-General says:

> "collective security can no longer be narrowly defined as the absence of armed conflict be it between or within States." (*A/55/1, para. 31*)

For example, the vast displacement of civilian populations has led to crises equal to those brought about by wars and conflicts, because of the trials and tribulations of those displaced persons: hunger, thirst, lack of safe housing, the spread of disease and rising crime rates. Moreover, international terrorism threatens the stability and security of many States, leading to the destruction of their economies.

With regard to disarmament, my country fully agrees with the Secretary-General, particularly in paragraph 103, and with his profound concern about the continuing risk posed by nuclear weapons, despite some progress in reducing them. The Arab Gulf region is one of the threatened areas. That is why we call for intensified international efforts to eliminate weapons of mass destruction in our region.

With regard to meeting humanitarian commitments, paragraph 109 of the report refers to humanitarian emergencies that far surpass the worst-case scenarios. We therefore call on the Organization to adopt necessary and effective measures, including recommendations presented to the General Assembly, to deal with humanitarian emergencies by mandating relevant United Nations authorities to take such necessary measures. Bahrain also believes that there is a need for coordinating efforts of humanitarian assistance and relief with relevant non-governmental organizations.

Regarding cooperation for development, paragraph 156 states that there are two challenges facing development in the era of globalization: first, to guarantee the effective participation of all States in the global trading system, and, secondly, to promote social and environmental goals as an integral part of our economic and financial strategies. Paragraph 157 of the report refers to international concern about those challenges. We believe that the General Assembly and its specialized organs should look into the matter so as to find internationally acceptable and practical ways to deal with the problems hampering development in the globalization era. The Secretary-General's report has spoken of the issues that affect the international community, of the importance of international cooperation and of guaranteeing the political will of Member States to achieve that cooperation in order to strike a balance between the interests of States as a whole and the individual national interests of each State individually.

Another matter we wish to touch upon is peacekeeping operations, which are experiencing an acute crisis for political and financial reasons. The

Organization is finding it difficult to face these problems. We continue to call for preventive diplomacy to prevent conflicts, but we realize that it is not possible in all cases and that each conflict has its own characteristics, not to mention the Organization's critical financial situation. The report of the Panel presided over by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi is very good, but where are we to find the necessary financing to implement its recommendations?

The United Nations is going through a critical stage at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We were hoping that the situation would be better so that it could enter the century stronger and more efficient.

Mr. Sharma (India): Permit me to compliment the President on the skill with which he has conducted the work of the Assembly and to say what a pleasure it is to see him presiding at this session.

The Assembly will be relieved to know that, to assist it in its work, I shall read out only portions of my somewhat longer statement.

We join previous speakers in thanking the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization and for introducing it at the beginning of the general debate. We also thank him and the Secretariat for their tireless efforts to make the Millennium Summit a success.

As the Secretary-General has said, we must read his report on the work of the Organization together with the one he prepared for the Summit and, in deciding on priorities for action, bear in mind what our leaders had to say when they met here earlier this month.

When he spoke to the Millennium Assembly, the Secretary-General in effect said that to act on the priorities set by the Summit, the United Nations must wage four fights: for development, against injustice, against violence and for the environment. We are glad that the Secretary-General sees those as tasks for the entire United Nations system to carry out because there was some ambiguity in his report, which listed those tasks in the section on peace and security as elements of the even more ambiguous concept of human security. This is not a quibble over words. Over the last few years, the Security Council has used an elastic concept of security to stretch its mandate well beyond what the Charter gave it. This is a development about which the majority of the membership of the United Nations is deeply uncomfortable. We would not like the Secretariat to promote this minority view. Economic and social problems can constitute a threat to peace and security only if they are allowed to fester. They cannot be addressed by bodies like the Security Council.

Last year, the Secretary-General asked the General Assembly to consider the challenges raised by what has come to be known as humanitarian intervention. As he acknowledges in his report, the vast majority of the membership rejected the concept. It is absent from the Millennium Declaration, the silence of our leaders being proof that it has gained no currency in the course of a year. But, in his report this year, the Secretary-General asks

> "if humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica — to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?" (*A/55/1, para. 37*)

By definition, those cases were exceptions to which an immediate and exceptional response should have been forthcoming. That response was absent not because of an absence of doctrine. The international community failed to act not because it did not have a theoretical underpinning for action, but because of a failure of political will and leadership. The danger in generalizing from exceptions is too obvious to have to be belaboured. We understand and share the Secretary-General's concern, but humanitarian intervention is not the answer.

We agree with the Secretary-General that peacekeeping is a vital area of the work of the United Nations. The surge in United Nations peacekeeping over the last year shows how much it is needed. The problems that beset it must be corrected. We therefore welcomed the appointment of the Brahimi Panel. With other Member States, we are carefully considering the Panel's courageous and far-reaching report. We believe that the Secretariat should not act piecemeal on its recommendations, which should be implemented only after they have been examined and approved by Member States.

Towards the end of its report, the Brahimi Panel refers in passing to a question that is crucial not only to peacekeeping, but to the credibility of the United Nations. The Panel refers to that question as "equitable

representation on the Security Council". The Secretary-General rightly reminded the Assembly when he introduced his report that our heads of State and Government have called for a reform that will make the Council more representative and legitimate, but also more effective.

The Council cannot claim to act on behalf of the general membership in the present circumstances. The lack of adequate representation of developing countries in the Council severely impairs its functioning and casts a shadow over the legitimacy of its decisions, which impact mainly on developing countries. We therefore hope that the reform and expansion of the Council will receive, after the Millennium Summit, the attention it deserves. We share the hope expressed by the President while closing the general debate that there is a willingness by the majority to move forward on this issue.

The Secretary-General and the United Nations system as a whole have placed increasing emphasis on good governance. This might be a concept on which a common definition still eludes us, but there is a general consensus that without democracy there can be no good governance. Like all democracies, we are pleased that democracy is increasingly the norm, casting aside dictatorships and authoritarian regimes. Yet, there has been some regression. In his report, the Secretary-General refers to two recent instances, but is silent on others. We laud his commitment to work with the Commonwealth and the international community on the matter of Fiji. We hope that he will use his moral authority to build international opinion against the military juntas that have overthrown democratically elected Governments and do nothing within the United Nations that would either give them any respectability or reason to believe that the international community had condoned their actions.

International terrorism is the growing menace of our age, battening on open, liberal, democratic and law-abiding societies. It is a collective challenge to societies everywhere, and can be countered only through cooperative endeavour. In the Millennium Declaration, our leaders committed themselves to concerted action. We hope for the early adoption of the comprehensive convention against terrorism now under discussion in the Assembly. In his report, the Secretary-General too has recognized terrorism as a direct threat to our collective security. We hope that the Secretariat's reports will focus more sharply than they presently do on international terrorists and the States that sponsor, finance and assist them.

We agree with the Secretary-General that disarmament is a critical element of the United Nations strategy for peace and security, and share his assessment that despite some progress in the reduction of nuclear weapons there is deep concern within the international community at the continuing risk posed by such weapons. We are disappointed that his report does not focus on the achievable goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that the United Nations has the foremost responsibility to promote nuclear disarmament. This should be both articulated and pursued as one of its highest priorities. The Secretary-General's leadership will be crucial in that task, as well as in convening quickly the international conference to identify ways to eliminate nuclear dangers.

Although the preamble of the Charter enjoins us to promote social progress and better standards of life and greater freedom, the United Nations record is mixed. As the Secretary-General has highlighted in paragraph 68 of his millennium report, half of the world's population still must try to survive on less than $2 a day. Some 1.2 billion people subsist on less than $1 a day. Removing such abject poverty must be the highest priority for the United Nations, an organization that would otherwise be irrelevant for the poor. Multilateral development cooperation must, therefore, be the central tenet of the United Nations, and even more so in the era of globalization and its pressures.

This requires the creation of an enabling international economic environment, transfer of technology, guaranteed special and differential treatment to products and services of export interest of developing countries, so that they can benefit from integration in the global trading system and the like. These are the issues on which the United Nations must act but where it is currently marginalized. The United Nations has institutional centrality on this crucial issue for future generations in the developing world and must claim it for the general good.

The era of globalization and liberalization, in which we live today, promised to humankind opportunities of unprecedented prosperity, and it was hoped that the free flow of capital, goods and services would bring about sustained and equitable economic growth for all nations. This, however, has not happened

and is not around the corner. The benefits have spread unevenly, resulting in a world where there is prosperity in a smaller part and poverty in the larger, where disparities and incoming wealth between nations and within nations are widening.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in paragraph 155 of his annual report on the work of the Organization, this has resulted in disquiet that is evident not only in the streets, as manifested in violent protests in Seattle and, more recently, in the Czech Republic, but also in the concerns about the consequences of globalization that pervade much of the developing world. To enable globalization to be a powerful and dynamic force for growth and development, it is essential that its benefits spread more equitably and the process be made more inclusive.

The United Nations has an institutional responsibility to conduct the discourse on the universally advantageous and corrective course of the globalization process. The Secretary-General has correctly pointed out in paragraph 16 of his annual report that these goals cannot be achieved without effective global institutions. We believe that global financial instability and volatility of capital flows pose serious problems for sustained economic development in developing countries; therefore, urgent reforms in the international financial architecture must be undertaken. We hope that the high-level event on financing for development to be held in 2001 will offer, we hope, the international community an opportunity to comprehensively address the diverse aspects of development, including the strengthening of international financial institutions for developmental purposes.

India believes that the test of economic growth and development is that it must bring about palpable improvement in the lives of the people. We are heartened to note that, while identifying the elimination of poverty worldwide as the most important goal of the United Nations, the Secretary-General has, in paragraph 168 of his annual report, emphasized the need for a new commitment on the part of the international community to transform paper targets into concrete achievements.

On the subject of the environment, while developing countries have done commendable work in the implementation of Agenda 21, the commitments undertaken by developed countries to make available new additional financial resources and environmentally sound technology on concessional terms to developing countries remain unfulfilled. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that the Rio Plus Ten review process should provide an opportunity to reassess what progress has been made towards achieving the targets established by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. We also hope that at the Rio Plus Ten meeting the international community will reinvigorate the global partnership needed to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

We have noted from paragraph 187 the work being done by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the field of environmental trade. We must caution that this should not in any way promote new conditionalities on trade and assistance.

Finally, I come to the crucial problem of resources. The Secretary-General refers more than once to the incompatibility between approved mandates and the resources available for their implementation. When the Secretary-General says in paragraph 296 of his report that he could "do more with less, but only up to a point", we agree. And we agree even more with his appeal to the Assembly not to condemn the United Nations to operating with a budget frozen in time. We are concerned that, as the report recalls, "the level of unpaid assessments ... remains unacceptably high". This long-standing problem must be urgently resolved.

In conclusion, I recall the Secretary-General's reminder that our task, and his, is to swiftly translate the Millennium Declaration into reality. It was perhaps apt that at this first General Assembly of a new century there should have been a touch of Janus in the choice of the quotation with which the Secretary-General began his address. The paean to colonialism from which he quoted, Rudyard Kipling's tellingly named "Recessional", is full of poor politics but better poetry, and it has two other lines that we would also do well to recall as we move forward:

> "Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
> Lest we forget — lest we forget".

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the exhaustive report he has submitted to the current fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the work of the Organization during the past year.

As he does every year, the Secretary-General has painted a full picture of the United Nations activities over the past 12 months. The report retraces the many diverse tasks of the Organization and highlights the challenges it faces every day in playing its role in accordance with the objectives of the Charter.

The Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the Millennium Summit shows us the road to follow in rising to the challenges that the Secretary-General has analysed clearly and sagaciously in his report, "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century", and in the report before us today on the work of the Organization. His view of the world's situation and prospects is thereby reinforced.

The scope of the Organization's field of action covered in the Secretary-General's report, as well as the brief time available to consider it, require us to focus our attention on some aspects of the report, on which we should like to make the following comments.

We fully share the Secretary-General's opinion on the need for the community of nations to consider globally the various elements contributing to common security as the only approach likely to lead to the establishment of lasting peace. Indeed, the international community is called on to adopt this global and multidimensional approach, which takes account of the links, interaction and interdependence between the objectives of the maintenance of international peace and security, development, the eradication of poverty, the protection of human rights and the promotion of democracy and good governance.

It is this approach that Tunisia has adopted and is implementing tirelessly. The Millennium Declaration strengthens this approach at the world level by making these fields of action the highest future priorities of the international community and by affirming the importance of interaction among those fields and their influence on each other.

In the context of the maintenance of international peace and security, we wish to refer to the question of peacekeeping operations, to the consideration of which the Secretary-General has rightly devoted an important place in his report. The Organization is currently at a key stage in its action in this field following the submission of three major reports, two of which address the United Nations experience in Rwanda and Srebrenica, while the third is of a more general scope, providing a global summary of United Nations activity in this field and a vision for the future. The latter report, submitted last August by the Panel chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, contains important recommendations that require the attention of all Member States and in-depth consideration, addressing as they do the fundamental functions of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation will actively participate in the Organization's deliberations on this report.

We endorse the Panel's statement on the need to strengthen the Organization's peacekeeping activities through the adoption of measures related to various aspects of these operations, including enhancing the capacities of the Secretariat, intensifying consultations between the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries, improving the conditions of deployment of these operations and other aspects. We also stress the need for the Organization to ensure that any reform designed to improve its capacity does not flout the sacrosanct principles of state sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence and of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. These principles are the foundations of the system of international relations on which its very survival is based. They must continue to guide the international community's efforts to address all the world's emergencies, including those in which humanitarian situations become major challenges that must be unequivocally met.

The Secretary-General rightly stresses the need for increased action in support of conflict-prevention. Indeed, today more than ever, conflict-prevention must become a global and integrated strategy to ensure in the long term not only the absence of armed conflict, but that conditions remain conducive to political, economic, social and cultural peace. The international community has the means to adopt such a strategy; what it needs is the will to implement it.

It seems to me that a sensible and viable long-term conflict-prevention strategy must take account of the profound causes of conflicts and of the violence that feeds and flows from them, which often originates

in the poor economic and social conditions of the people they engulf — in other words, in underdevelopment and poverty.

We believe that effective management of the requirements of economic and social development would substantially contribute to preventing the causes of the conflicts and violence prevailing in several regions of the world. In this vein, we believe it necessary to accelerate the economic and social development of the countries of the South, particularly the poorest among them. Africa is certainly a continent that calls for particular attention on the part of the international community. The Millennium Summit clearly stressed that need.

Before I conclude my statement, I wish to refer to the question of sanctions and to stress the interest that should be accorded to the ongoing improvement and refining of their use as a tool at the service of international peace and security. The experience of the past decade has demonstrated the need to change the way sanctions are used so as to alleviate their negative effects on peoples, the significance of which we have noted particularly in the case of such general sanctions regimes as that which has been imposed on Iraq over the course of the past 10 years.

Any reform of the practice of imposing sanctions should take account of certain criteria, including in particular the resort to sanctions only as a last resort once all peaceful means have been exhausted. When sanctions prove necessary, their duration should be limited and clear conditions defined for their lifting or suspension. There must also be a continuous evaluation of the humanitarian repercussions on the people of targeted countries and of the sanctions' direct impact on the interests of third countries.

Mr. Petrič (Slovenia): This being the first time I have had the honour to address the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, I wish to add my voice to all those that have congratulated Mr. Holkeri on his assumption of his important post. My delegation is ready to lend its full support to his endeavours to conduct the work of this session to a successful outcome.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization. It provides us with a comprehensive yet concise overview of the activities of the United Nations. It also offers a number of new ideas on how to conduct these activities in the future. In conjunction with the Secretary-General's millennium report, the annual report gives us a unique opportunity to exchange our views on issues before us and to try to chart a course for action to be taken by the United Nations and this Assembly.

Allow me briefly to touch upon a set of issues that my delegation finds of particular importance.

The first is the "dilemma of intervention", a topic that has been at the centre of discussions during the Millennium Summit and the general debate this year. In his report, the Secretary-General rightly points to the changing nature of threats to peace and security. Today the United Nations is increasingly confronted with intra-State conflicts. It should therefore come as no surprise that in dealing with these conflicts we encounter a dilemma between so-called humanitarian intervention and respect for State sovereignty.

If we want the United Nations to act effectively to prevent the worst kinds of mass crimes and to be an effective guardian of international peace and security, we cannot avoid addressing this dilemma. The United Nations Member States in general, and the permanent members of the Security Council in particular, should act in accordance with the Charter and their shared responsibility for peace and security. In the present context, this means that we should not shy away from the issue of intervention, however complex it may be. If we do so, it we will be accepting either passivity on the part of the United Nations with respect to the gravest kinds of mass crimes, or the dangerous threat of interventions bypassing the United Nations.

We note and share the fear expressed by the Secretary-General that, given the reaction to his views on humanitarian intervention, we may fail again next time to prevent tragedies of dramatic proportions such as the ones that took place in Rwanda and Srebrenica. But we should not wait and see if this fear is realized. We should not wait for new atrocities to happen and then see if the international community again witnesses them passively. We should now, without delay, discuss possible ways to lay the foundation for adequate preventive action, including intervention, if and when necessary. Without any doubt, the Security Council in particular should serve as the framework for, and guide of, this process.

In our view, the United Nations is the most appropriate forum for this kind of discussion. We

believe there is an urgent need to elaborate in advance the standards and doctrine for humanitarian intervention, based on a modern interpretation of the Charter and in line with international relations and norms. For this reason we welcome the Canadian initiative and the establishment of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. We look forward to the findings and recommendations of this Commission. Hopefully, the input by this Commission will help States to reach consensus on the challenge posed by the "dilemma of intervention".

Through the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, a large majority of States have clearly demonstrated their will to put an end to impunity. The establishment of the International Criminal Court is in many ways a historic step. For the first time in history, there is a mechanism in sight which will, it is hoped, ensure that those responsible for the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, wherever committed, will not go unpunished. We hope that the necessary number of ratifications will be deposited soon, so as to enable the Court to function. The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia is to ratify the Rome Statute before the end of the year.

Another aspect of improving the effectiveness of the United Nations relates to its peace operations. We commend the initiative by the Secretary-General to establish the Panel on Peace Operations, which, under the chairmanship of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, recently issued a landmark report on the shortcomings of current practices and on ways to overcome them. We support the Panel's recommendations and hope for their early implementation. Some of these recommendations will require additional resources, and Slovenia is willing to contribute its share. As my Foreign Minister already stated in his address to the Assembly, Slovenia has decided to voluntarily relinquish the discount it has enjoyed in the current peacekeeping scale of assessments. Accordingly, beginning next year, Slovenia will contribute its full share to the cost of peacekeeping operations.

I wish also to share some thoughts on the phenomenon of globalization. Recent events in Prague, along with those that took place earlier in Seattle, justify the placement of globalization among the top issues addressed by the Secretary-General's report. No matter how pleased or displeased we may be with it, globalization is inevitable and probably unstoppable. Many feel marginalized and powerless in face of the forces of globalization. What we can do about it, though, is important: we can strive, on the one hand, to maximize its potential to improve people's lives worldwide, and, on the other hand, to prevent or alleviate its negative effects.

Globalization should not translate into an unbridled quest by private corporations for the cheapest labour and highest returns, with no regard for social welfare or the environment. On the contrary, globalization can and should serve as a powerful instrument to bring decent wages, social progress, prosperity and high environmental standards to every corner of the world. For this to happen, Governments, private corporations and international economic and financial institutions, as well as civil society and non-governmental organizations, should cooperate with a view to ensuring the effective management of global economic and social affairs. Without such management, the idea of spreading the benefits of globalization will remain an illusion.

In this context, we encourage the Secretary-General to build further on his initiative for a Global Compact and to aim for an early definition, and even codification, of good practices to be observed by all actors of globalization.

Mr. Dausá Céspedes (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Millennium Summit has recently [illegible]ed, and the international community is now awaiting concrete results. The report submitted to us by the Secretary-General this year — and we are very grateful to him for it — constitutes, in our opinion, a valuable reference document on the most recent successes and failures of our Organization, and therefore a useful instrument in designing and undertaking future actions.

The so-called intervention dilemma is reiterated once again in the Secretary-General's report. Cuba's stance on this question is well known.

We cannot hope to see the United Nations contribute to the advent of a safer world if neo-interventionism disguised as humanitarian action is legitimized. The security problems we face today will never be resolved through these so-called humanitarian interventions, which not only pose a grave threat to the security and stability of developing countries, but place the United Nations in a subordinate position, subject to the designs of hegemonistic interests.

Certain States are increasingly ignoring the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which have governed international relations for 50 years, and even seeking to do away with them. The current international order — which is unjust and profoundly inequitable — cannot be replaced by an even more primitive one based on a reinterpretation of the Charter and of international law.

We agree with the Secretary-General as to the importance of conflict prevention. The cost of prevention is minimal compared to the losses incurred as a result of conflicts. But in order to be truly effective, prevention strategies require continuing efforts, often unobtrusive and low-profile in the context of the media.

The best form of prevention, and in the long term the only effective one, is to deal with the root causes of conflicts, in particular problems related to economic and social development. It is not by chance that in the past 10 years, more than half of the 45 poorest countries of the world have been the scene of armed conflict or other forms of extreme violence. If due attention is not given to the adverse effects of the imposition of a neo-liberal model in a globalized world, and if the gap between rich and poor countries continues to grow, inevitably we will see an increase in crisis and conflicts.

In the last decade the Security Council has made much more frequent use of sanctions. However, this increased usage has not been accompanied by the elimination or even a reduction in the number of conflicts. The imposition of sanctions should be an extreme measure, and not — as is frequently the case today — a means of punishing certain countries, in pursuit of the narrow national interests of specific members of the Security Council.

Can anyone seriously claim that it is never justifiable to impose sanctions against developed countries that have endangered international peace and security? However, it is not surprising that, since the Security Council is a body in which the developing countries are completely under-represented, the 15 sanctions regimes imposed thus far by the Council have all been imposed on countries of the developing world. It is particularly telling that almost 70 per cent of the sanctions currently in force are directed against African countries.

We are pleased that in the section devoted to human rights development the report of the Secretary-General includes a subsection on "Challenges ahead". However, probably for reasons of space, it is extremely short and makes no reference to a group of questions that are of great importance to Cuba. A minority group of countries has been imposing its approach and views on decisions adopted at the international level in the field of human rights. With but one exception, all the resolutions concerning countries adopted by the Commission on Human Rights since 1990 cite underdeveloped countries as the violators of human rights, and all those resolutions were proposed by developed countries.

We must halt the political manipulation of human rights, the selectivity, partiality and double standards that prevail in the imposition of rigid norms. We must not allow the imposition of absolutist ideas of democracy based on foreign models that in general reflect the approach of the former colonial Powers.

Despite a certain optimistic tone in the report of the Secretary-General with its mention of the results of the year 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it is regrettable that some nuclear-weapon States tried until the last moment to prevent inclusion in the final Declaration of the Millennium Summit of even a timid appeal for the convening of an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. This position is at variance with the commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate such weapons.

Moreover, how is it possible to explain that, as the report of the Secretary-General reveals, in 1999 annual military expenditures increased for the first time in the post-cold-war period, rising to approximately $780 billion? How much could be achieved if only a very small part of that money were used to promote development?

The payment crisis created by the Organization's principal contributor, in order to impose that country's policies, is affecting the proper functioning of the Organization. The zero-growth budget policy — also imposed by the principal contributor — is unworkable, as it undermines the United Nations capacity to fulfil the purposes and principles of the Charter, in particular those that relate to economic and social development, and leads to the imposition of certain priorities far from

the interests and needs of the majority of Member States.

Cuba believes that the discussions to be held on reform of the scale of assessments for the regular budget and of the special scale for the financing of peacekeeping operations should result in the elimination of the ceiling on the scale of assessments and the institutionalization of the current special scale.

In conclusion, I would like to refer briefly to the report (A/55/305) on peace operations prepared by a Panel of experts appointed by the Secretary-General, whose recommendations have very significant implications for the future of the United Nations. While some of the recommendations take into account legitimate proposals that many of us have been reiterating in recent years, a significant number of others — many concerning matters outside the competence of the Secretary-General — give cause for concern, at the very least. In any case, there is an obvious need for a process of wide-ranging and transparent discussion within the framework of the General Assembly, where all Member States can participate and where it may be possible to reach consensus on these essential subjects. Cuba will participate actively in this process.

Mr. Adam (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I commend the excellent report of the Secretary-General that the General Assembly is considering today.

Before turning to several points of substance, I would like to emphasize what my country believes is the major conclusion of the Millennium Summit. This is that — despite the criticisms regularly directed at our Organization, criticisms that are justified at times — the Organization is playing and will continue to play a central role in the response of the international community to the many challenges with which it is confronted: above all, the maintenance of international peace and security, but also human development, the management of both the opportunities and the challenges of globalization, and the promotion and protection of human rights. During the discussions of this fifty-fifth session we must bear in mind this unanimous show of support.

We note first the part of the report of the Secretary-General that shows a substantial increase in the resources devoted to United Nations peacekeeping operations; our Organization is now deploying 45,000 military and 13,000 civilian personnel, with the financial consequences that we all know. Further, the report (A/55/305) drafted at the Secretary-General's request by a Panel of eminent persons chaired by Mr. Brahimi makes a series of recommendations on the mandates and conduct of peacekeeping operations, recommendations that have received broad support from Member States. This report is based on findings of the troop-contributing countries themselves and draws lessons that we fully endorse. The implementation of these recommendations will come with a cost that will have to be borne in an equitable manner. It is desirable that the next report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, in 2001, should be able to speak of significant progress in this field. That is why all of us, and in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, must always bear in mind the strong message delivered to us by the heads of State and Government on the irreplaceable role of the United Nations as a guarantor of world peace.

A second issue on which the Secretary-General is rightly focusing his sustained attention is that of globalization and of its consequences for our countries. We are compelled to note, as numerous heads of State and Government have already done, that the available opportunities are shared in a most unequal manner by Member States. Here again our Organization is challenged to find elements of response very quickly, and it is working at that actively, albeit with much difficulty, particularly in the Economic and Social Council.

In this context, I would like to commend once again the initiatives of the Secretary-General with a view to making our Organization reach out to and indeed enter into partnership with organizations in civil society and the private sector, which play determining roles in the multidimensional management of tomorrow's world. This is another aspect of the pioneering action of our Organization in adapting itself to a changing world. The meeting of presiding officers of parliaments that preceded the Millennium Summit also reminded us very appropriately of the concerns of the elected officials of our nations relating to these changes.

On the occasion of this debate, I would like to welcome certain advances made this past year that deserves particular attention. First, the year 2000 will be remembered as the year when the United Nations really came to terms with Africa, following the

issuance in 1998 of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (S/1998/318), and through the efforts of a number of Member States, including Belgium. In the future we must work to ensure that Africa will not be left behind by globalization.

The special session on the follow-up of the World Summit for Social Development and the special session of the General Assembly on Beijing + Five both made it possible for the United Nations to reaffirm that the human being is at the centre of its development efforts and to make progress towards a recognition of the universality of certain concepts, in particular women's rights in society.

Next there is the resolute action of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), which makes it possible at least to contain to a degree the spread of the HIV/AIDS virus, if not to put an end to it. This pandemic constitutes both a human and an economic disaster for a great many countries and is therefore a factor of profound destabilization.

Belgium would like to voice its concern regarding the humanitarian field, in particular regarding the difficulties encountered by the humanitarian personnel of the United Nations, in terms of having access to zones of conflict, which is often refused to them, as well as their own security, often precarious, as was demonstrated by the murder of three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Timor on the eve of the Millennium Summit. The list of victims is becoming longer from year to year. We must effectively protect those staff members and firmly punish their attackers.

Furthermore, like the Secretary-General, we should all be concerned by the fact that the response to the needs announced in the first consolidated inter-agency appeal this year amounted to only 34 per cent of needs, even though the needs in humanitarian aid are immense and economic growth would allow the release of financial gains that would have been quite unexpected only a few years ago.

Lastly, the absence of agreement among Member States regarding internally displaced persons resulting from internal conflicts in the Economic and Social Council's July segment is a deeply regrettable failure for our Organization. We hope that this will be corrected during the current session of the General Assembly.

I cannot leave the subject of the humanitarian field without expressing my Government's sincerest congratulations to Mrs. Sadako Ogata for her activities at the head of UNHCR, as she will be leaving at the end of this year. She fully deserves our gratitude.

To conclude, I would like to say a word about the reform of the Security Council, another subject that was at the centre of the concerns of the heads of State at the Millennium Summit. In order to ensure the credibility, representativeness, and effectiveness of that leading organ of our Organization, a reform is urgent. When it comes to such a technically complex and politically sensitive question, I would encourage the Secretary-General to tirelessly continue his mediation efforts, as he is doing in many areas, to ensure that the momentum of the search for a solution is not exhausted.

Mr. Lancry (Israel): The annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/55/1) reveals quite clearly and quite impressively the myriad activities in which the United Nations and its bodies have been involved over the past year. The report stresses the following three issues which we believe deserve special attention: the AIDS pandemic, the United Nations role in peacekeeping and the coordinated management of globalization.

Africa has been identified by the United Nations as the continent most deserving of our attention. As the Secretary-General's report has so starkly presented, the AIDS pandemic is destroying the social and economic fabric of entire countries in that continent. It has reversed years of development efforts and has placed an unbearable burden upon States, societies and communities. We welcome and are encouraged by the attention and effort which the United Nations is expending to confront this scourge, and we look forward to the discussion of this issue next week in the General Assembly plenary and in the upcoming special session of the General Assembly devoted exclusively to this horrific crisis. We firmly support the timely adoption of a practical and decisive international plan of action to confront this challenge.

With regard to the United Nations peacekeeping operations, the recent report of the Panel on Peace Operations drew special attention to the lack of resources which has plagued those operations and had a

serious impact on their ability to fulfil their goals. It is now clear that effective and predictable financial support is crucial to the success of any peace mission. In this regard, we support initiatives to modify the scale of assessments so as to distribute the financial burdens of these operations more equitably. We will support efforts to introduce a 25 per cent ceiling on individual assessments.

At this time, Israel wishes to inform the General Assembly of its decision to forgo the 80 per cent reduction it had previously enjoyed and to pay its full assessment to the United Nations peacekeeping budget.

Thirdly, the report's discussion of globalization highlights the challenges and opportunities inherent in the current race towards economic integration. The forces of globalization have the power to both enrich and impoverish. A country's openness to integration and free markets can help to alleviate poverty and disease, but it can also serve to increase its vulnerability to the impact of volatile global markets.

Israel firmly supports the Secretary-General's Global Compact initiative, as well as the promotion of "coalitions for change", as a valuable means to harness the productive potential of globalization, to distribute its rewards more evenly and to maximize the ability of national Governments to protect their citizens from the pitfalls of the open market. The Secretary-General's annual report has indeed demonstrated the wide-ranging and comprehensive role played by this Organization around the globe.

From Israel's perspective, this year has been very significant for our relationship with the United Nations. Two events in particular have signalled to Israel, its citizens and its supporters worldwide that the United Nations may indeed have the capacity to relate to Israel as a nation like any other.

First, this year marks Israel's temporary acceptance into the Group of Western European and Other States. Our inclusion in that group will help to rectify an anomaly that has affected no other nation. It is an important step, albeit a first step, towards Israel's full integration into the United Nations. For the principle of sovereign equality as laid down in Article 2 of the Charter to be fully realized, Israel must be accepted in a regional grouping in all United Nations headquarters around the world and must become eligible for the same candidatures as are all other United Nations Members. At the same time, we remain committed to achieving membership among our natural partners in the Asian Group. In lieu of that membership, however, our inclusion in the Group of Western European and Other States will serve to increase our ability to participate as a full and equal Member State. The Secretary-General's efforts in this metamorphosis were, and will continue to be, crucial to its success.

The second event was the unprecedented coordination that existed between the United Nations and Israel with regard to the pullout of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon. In full coordination with the United Nations, and in keeping with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon on 24 May 2000. Following the withdrawal, the United Nations worked to confirm Israel's fulfilment of its part of the resolution. On 16 June 2000, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, submitted his report to the Security Council on the implementation of Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). That detailed document reflected hundreds of hours of briefings with Israeli and Lebanese officials, discussions with the national leaders of the two States, inspections on the ground by United Nations officials and an investigation of the line of withdrawal. In his conclusion, the Secretary-General stated unequivocally:

> "I can report to the Security Council that Israel has withdrawn its forces from Lebanon in accordance with resolution 425 (1978)". (*S/2000/590, para. 40*)

The Security Council in turn welcomed the report, endorsed its conclusions and cleared the way for the completion of the implementation of its resolution 425 (1978).

It must be recalled that, in addition to calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces, Security Council resolution 425 (1978) also calls for the restoration of international peace and security and for the return of the effective authority of the Government of Lebanon in the area. Now that Israel has withdrawn its forces, and now that the United Nations has confirmed its full compliance with Council resolution 425 (1978), we call once again upon the other parties to fulfil their remaining obligations under that resolution so that peace and security may come, at long last, to that area.

Israel hopes that this transitional period in southern Lebanon will open a new chapter of peace and

security along the border and of mutual trust between the people of Israel and the people of Lebanon. It recognizes and appreciates the efforts of the United Nations and of the Secretary-General in promoting that goal.

The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization is broad in its outlook and global in its scope. It demonstrates the multi-faceted activities of the United Nations and its bodies over the past year. Yet beyond that, from Israel's perspective, this year of United Nations activity has marked a significant step forward in both our integration into the United Nations system and in the degree of cooperation between us and the Organization. We are satisfied by these developments and, in the spirit of Article 2 of the Charter, look forward in the coming year to beginning a new era of equality in Israel's status in the family of nations.

As the Secretary-General's report has clearly indicated, the resolution of conflicts and the building of peace rank very high among the concerns of the nations of the world. It is of the highest concern to us as well. We in the Middle East stand on the threshold of historic decisions. It is our hope that those decisions will be taken imminently and that they will lead to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace for us and for generations to come. May it be God's will that next year's report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization will also include a few paragraphs describing the achievement of lasting peace in the Middle East.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.31

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-fifth session

31st plenary meeting
Thursday, 28 September 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 10 *(continued)*

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/55/1)

Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova): Allow me to complement you, Mr. President, on the manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly and to wish you every success.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for a stimulating and comprehensive annual report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). We also commend him for his decision to introduce the report, as was done during the past three years, in a plenary meeting at the outset of the general debate, allowing us to focus better in the ministerial debate. This is a welcome arrangement, which should continue in the future.

The report under consideration gives up a broad and analytical perspective on what the United Nations does and what it expects to do. It also provides an opportunity to review whether the United Nations is equipped to meet present and future challenges by delivering approaches and recommendations focused on areas where the United Nations can make a real difference.

My delegation appreciates the Secretary-General's depiction of problems that currently confront the international community. Like many other delegations, we also believe that globalization is among the most important challenges facing us all. Nevertheless, the challenges addressed first and foremost by the United Nations Charter, those of peace and security, still have a very central role in today's world. We welcome the Secretary-General's emphasis in his report on the issues of achieving peace and security. The report reminded us that since last September numerous internal conflicts have continued and new wars have broken out. We have seen that the efforts of the international community, including those of the United Nations, to bring peace and stability to those areas have had rather mixed success and some show a distressing tendency to unravel.

As a country affected by a long-running internal conflict, we have always been very sensitive to issues that involve preventing and resolving conflicts. Therefore, we are supportive of the Secretary-General's proposals and approaches, including those contained in the report under consideration, seek to prevent conflicts, stop armed conflicts and keep and build sustainable peace in the area. We commend in particular his initiative in convening the Brahimi panel on United Nations peacekeeping operations and welcome his commitment to implement, together with the Member States, the panel's key recommendations. The experience of recent years has clearly shown that the United Nations capacity to meet an expanding and an increasingly complex range of peacekeeping demands needs significant improvement. Consequently, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations also needs to be strengthened. We agree therefore with the Secretary-General that additional resources must be

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envisioned in order to allow the United Nations to carry out its mandate in the field of peacekeeping and peace-building.

With regard to conflict prevention, Moldova strongly advocates enhancing the United Nations capacity to identify and respond to conflict situations. We are pleased to find out that a prevention team has been established to this end within the Department of Political Affairs. We hope very much that this new unit will pay due attention to all potential conflict areas, and that the specific situation in the Transdnestr region of the Republic of Moldova will also be scrutinized from the perspective of conflict prevention.

We share the view that preventive strategies must reach all communities that are experiencing emergencies. The unequal attention given by the international system to certain conflicts or conflict situations remains a matter of great concern. We draw attention to the appeal made recently by the chairperson of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to increase the political awareness of the world community with regard to a number of unresolved or potential conflicts and the attendant security risks, which often remain outside the spotlight of broader public attention despite their highly destabilizing impact on the region and beyond. It is well known that very often it is the newly independent States currently undergoing profound economic and political transformation that are the objects and victims of conflict situations.

The ardent desire of the peoples of the countries concerned is that these conflicts or conflict situations be terminated and their root causes eliminated. The Secretary-General's report identifies a number of needs and objectives that, in a sense, provide the necessary basis, if implemented, for gradual elimination of the root causes of the conflicts I have mentioned.

The United Nations needs to be refocused and increase its effectiveness so as to play a leading role in shaping this globalizing era. Globalization is a great historic shift offering unparalleled opportunity for huge advancements in human development. But, as the Secretary-General observed, there are risks. Globalization creates losers as well as winners. The challenge, in our view, is to manage these objects equitably and sustainably. The United Nations needs to do more in providing leadership to drive the development agenda and pursue the development targets Member States have set.

We welcome therefore the broadening of the dialogue between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, focused on strengthening financial arrangements as well as eradicating poverty. Moldova also supports the Secretary-General's efforts to engage the United Nations in a regular dialogue with the private sector and civil organizations involved in the development process.

My delegation agrees that the United Nations and its partners, including global ones, have extraordinary capacities in the development field and that it is imperative to use them effectively in a synergetic way.

In the final analysis, we consider that all these new global partnerships will enhance the capacity of the Organization to assist the developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, to share in the benefits of globalization. The annual report before the General Assembly today embraces all the main areas in which the United Nations is mandated to conduct its activities. Today we have focused our statement on only a few subjects that are, in our view, particularly relevant. However, all the subjects brought to our attention by the Secretary-General are of importance, and it is the intention of my delegation to devote the same attention to each of them in the course of this session.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate its full support for the Secretary-General's activities and for reforming the United Nations and making it more efficient and relevant to the new millennium.

Mr. Al-Humaimidi (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The comprehensive report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/55/1 covers the increasing activities of the United Nations in a world undergoing enormous changes — a fact that underscores the importance of the role of the United Nations and the need to enhance the Organization and promote its credibility and independence. The Secretary-General has touched upon many important topics, and it would be very difficult to comment on every one of them. We will therefore express our position on issues as they come up on the agenda. However, there are some matters that we feel we must address now. I shall begin with the topic of sanctions.

First of all, we welcome the Secretary-General's conclusion that doubts regarding the effectiveness of sanctions have increased in recent years, as well as his concern about the negative effects of sanctions on civilian populations and on neighbouring countries whose trade suffers from sanctions without compensation. The Secretary-General calls upon the international community to reflect upon the current system of sanctions and on whether it is in keeping with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, in particular with regard to the comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Those sanctions are now entering their eleventh year and are by any measure a form of collective punishment imposed on the Iraqi people. They have led to the death of approximately 1.5 million Iraqi citizens, including 500,000 children under the age of five, as has been affirmed by the report of the United Nations Children's Fund that was published on 12 August 1999. Moreover, the sanctions have destroyed the social fabric of the country and are killing approximately 7,000 children every month. On the basis of this data, there is absolutely no doubt that those sanctions are blatantly in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law. This has been confirmed by United Nations agencies and humanitarian and human rights organizations.

Further proof of the negative effects of the sanctions against Iraq is provided by the working paper adopted at Geneva by the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights at its fifty-second session, which was held from 31 July to 25 August 2000. That document affirmed that the comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq are illegitimate under international humanitarian law. Despite increasing calls by the international community to end this genocide, the United Nations — with the support of the United Kingdom — insists on perpetuating those sanctions as part of its plan to destabilize the region, create permanent tension, impose its hegemony over the region and rob it of its wealth. The United States of America has unequivocally declared its intention to use the veto against any attempt to lift the sanctions imposed against Iraq. Moreover, its Secretary of State has said on a television programme that the death of half a million Iraqi children is an acceptable price for the ongoing sanctions.

Considering that the Member States of the United Nations have conferred upon the Security Council the mandate to speak on their behalf, in line with the purposes and principles of the Organization and Article 24 of the Charter, and given that the Council has gone beyond the purposes and principles of the Charter with regard to the sanctions imposed against Iraq and is thereby providing cover for the application of genocidal policies against an entire people, the Member States of the United Nations should express their opinion as to the Council's adherence to its mandate. It should also be mentioned that Article 25 of the Charter stipulates that the Member States must accept the resolutions of the Security Council and implement them in accordance with the Charter. In other words, the comprehensive sanctions against Iraq — which are illegitimate under international humanitarian law and violate the concept of human rights — do not represent a Council decision to which Member States should be committed.

Mr. Mungra (Suriname), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My second point deals with the achievement of peace and security. The Secretary-General has spoken about, and provided examples of, the changes that have taken place since the end of the cold war with regard to threats to peace and security. We believe that it is appropriate to focus on a new type of threat, namely, that of a single State or States employing armed force against sovereign States in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations. That was the case in the aggression against Yugoslavia and the ongoing aggression against Iraq.

Iraq is subjected to daily raids by British and American planes in the "no flight zone", which was imposed by a unilateral decision by the Governments of Washington and London. Those planes take off from bases in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey. Those zones, established in 1991 and 1992, are in no way legitimate and have no basis in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, a fact that has been confirmed by the Secretary-General and by numerous countries, including three permanent members of the Council. The United Nations is called upon to end this aggression and to bring those responsible for it to account.

My third point refers to humanitarian intervention. Iraq joins the majority of the Member

States of the United Nations in affirming that the concept of humanitarian intervention runs counter to international law, the Charter of the United Nations and such basic principles of the current international order as sovereignty, political independence, regional integrity and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States. The Non-Aligned Movement has declared its rejection of the concept of humanitarian intervention and has affirmed that human rights should not be used as a political tool to intervene in the internal affairs of States. The Charter, international conventions on human rights and other relevant international mechanisms provide the framework for dealing with violations of human rights. Those rights should be promoted, but imposing new ideas such as humanitarian intervention in a world where one dominant Power prevails will not serve the interests of international security but will in fact put international security at risk. The first victims of that undermined security will be the countries of the third world.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and farsighted report on the work of the Organization. This report offers the General Assembly a broad picture of our achievements over the course of the last year and of the challenges ahead. Coupled with his complementary statement to the General Assembly, the present report is another successful effort on the part of the Secretary-General and his colleagues to restore to the United Nations its rightful role in pursuit of global peace and security.

The Secretary-General's report shows clearly that there is no alternative to strengthening the United Nations as the central mechanism for ensuring peace and security in the world. The developments that marked the reporting period, and the way the international community tried to cope with them, have confirmed that there is no other universal tool to ensure the joint management of international relations. In this context, the endeavours undertaken by the United Nations in the past year, as described in the report, along with the successful holding of the Millennium Summit, are promising.

In his report, the Secretary-General has highlighted, among other things, the way the United Nations handles armed conflicts, as well as the role the Organization can play in helping control collectively the process of globalization. These are among the most significant issues at the top of the international agen and, at the same time, command the greatest attent and concern of the international community.

While humanity is undergoing the most radi changes ever experienced by humankind, and wi significant efforts are needed to direct the course events in a way compatible with the interests of majority of the world population, it is distressing t local conflicts in some parts of the globe, especially Africa, are continuing unabated. In view of th ongoing crises and conflicts that cause enorm humanitarian suffering, loss of life and have an adve impact on the socio-economic development of affected regions, sustainable peace and security for countries and people remain central objectives of United Nations, just as they were when Organization was founded over half a century ago.

United Nations peacekeeping operations extremely visible and they therefore come under cl scrutiny by world public opinion. The political wei of the United Nations is measured by the outside wo mainly by the way it tackles and manages conf situations across the globe. Therefore, it should worrisome that, in recent years, United Nati peacekeeping activities have been criticized for lack of uniform standards applied equally to regions, for the lack of adequate funding and resour for mismanagement, and for other reasons. In context, and in view of the reform of the Un Nations still on the agenda, there is a pressing ne and a precious opportunity, to articulate a m effective and efficient role for the United Nations conflict management in the midst of fundame changes on the international scene.

Three major studies commissioned by Secretary-General last year have demonstrated that attention was being paid to the issue and that Secretariat was committed to addressing seriously crux of the matter, with a view to removing deficiencies and to better understanding the needs the potential of peacekeeping operations. In the f two studies, on the circumstances surrounding crimes against humanity in Srebrenica and Rwan efforts have been made to shed light on what w wrong, including within the Secretariat, and to d lessons that could help the smooth running of curr and future peacekeeping operations.

In view of the increasingly complex task faced by peacekeeping operations as the United Nations seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, the third study, undertaken by a panel of experts established at the initiative of the Secretary-General and led skilfully and ably by Ambassador Brahimi, is considered to be an important and useful step in the right direction. We are confident that the major overview conducted by the Brahimi Panel and the recommendations put forward by it will greatly contribute to ensuring more effective and efficient peacekeeping operations in the future. In the meantime, we believe that the Panel's report needs to be thoroughly and constructively considered and debated by the Member States in the different bodies of the United Nations. While some of the Panel's recommendations relate to matters that are fully within the purview of the Secretary General, others will need the approval of different bodies of the United Nations.

Today, peacekeeping operations remain an important means for the United Nations to fulfil its obligations in safeguarding world peace and security. However, given the extent of the challenges and complexity of tasks and responsibilities, there is a need for more, better-equipped and trained troops, adequate resources, the appropriate mandate, preparedness for a worst-case scenario and coordinated joint action by Member States and the Secretariat. We believe that we need to build on the momentum generated following the release of the Panel's report and to continue to debate the pressing issues facing peacekeeping operations so as to find proper remedies for the current deficiencies in this field.

In the context of conflict resolution, it is worth recalling that religion can help greatly to combat the hatred and persecution that continue to fuel so many conflicts within and without national borders. Here, I would like to echo the Secretary-General's remark in his address to the Millennium World Peace Summit in New York, when he invited the religious leaders to look within and consider promoting justice, equality, reconciliation and peace. We believe that the promotion of this idea can mitigate some of the fundamental problems lying at the origin of most conflicts.

Attention paid at the Millennium Summit to the issues of concern to the world community, especially the developing world, such as globalization, poverty eradication, the increasing digital divide, and so forth, should be considered a positive development in international relations. Pledges undertaken by the heads of State and Government from both the developed and developing worlds are encouraging and should be followed up by our Organization.

Globalization is gaining currency as the prevailing conceptual framework within which a considerable portion of recent international developments and interdependencies can be interpreted. The real debate is not about whether globalization exists and will continue to do so, but about how its costs and benefits are distributed. Globalization remains potentially a powerful dynamic force for growth and development. It can improve the overall performance of developing countries' economies by opening up market opportunities for their exports, by promoting the transfer of technology and by increasing the financial resources available for investment.

Maximizing the benefits of globalization requires the international community to address the imbalances and asymmetries in the international economy, including the new economy based on information technology and characterized, inter alia, by the digital divide, which if not bridged, will result in a widening of the gap between the poor and the rich and will render many potential changes in the social, economic and environmental arenas impossible or meaningless. It is evident that international cooperation is the only way to harness the power of globalization to a vision of the good life for all. Sustainability has little meaning in a world marked by poverty and inequality. It is more than clear now that, although globalization is a reality, it is at the same time subject to policy options.

The eradication of poverty still lies at the heart of all endeavours for development in the developing world and has always been a priority of international cooperation for development. The fact remains, however, that poverty has not declined in most regions and in some regions is increasing. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General,

> "half of the world's population still must try to survive on less than $2 a day". *(A/55/1, para. 165)*

The outcomes of major United Nations conferences and their reviews, particularly the World Summit for Social Development, have set targets for the international community to halve the incidence of poverty by 2015. The translation of these commitments into effective action needs coherence and the

coordinated efforts of all relevant bodies within the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, regional bodies, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. It has become clear that aid alone cannot and will not contribute to poverty eradication; rather, the active participation of developing countries in the international economy and their integration into the international financial and trade system through their effective participation in international decision-making in these fields and market access are also imperative to the success of policies for poverty eradication and their implementation.

The United Nations system has played a major role in raising the concerns of developing countries at international forums, designing poverty eradication policies in developing countries and disseminating best practices within the developing world. Nevertheless, there is a need to create a vision for future actions of the United Nations in the area of poverty eradication through its full participation in global economic policy-making and by strengthening its unique role as a universal Organization for the coordination of social and economic policies at the international level, in cooperation with international and regional financial and trade bodies.

We have come a long way since we met in 1992 at Rio, where we managed to achieve a convoluted compromise and a delicate balance on how to proceed to protect the environment while maintaining the pace of growth and at the same time being responsive to the legitimate quest of developing countries for sustained economic growth in an enabling international environment. The Islamic Republic of Iran is looking forward to the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 and its preparatory process and considers the event to be another chance for all States to subject themselves to an assessment of their level of compliance with the practical requirements of the principles agreed and commitments made at Rio with a view to removing the obstacles impeding the full implementation of Agenda 21.

Of prime importance to developing countries is the pivotal principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which will remain the prevalent spirit inspiring any further review in which the developing world will participate. Iran will continue to offer its best affordable contribution to the advancement of sustainable development — inter alia, through the 10-year review process — and will remain committed to any international endeavour aimed at the dual containment of environmental degradation and poverty.

Ms. Durrant (Jamaica): Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for the preparation and presentation of his annual report on the work of the Organization, which offers a very informative and comprehensive overview of the various aspects of the work of the United Nations. We believe that this report will serve as a useful basis for our deliberations throughout the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Since most of the issues raised in the report will be addressed under separate agenda items, I will confine my remarks to two areas of concern to my delegation: increasing the emphasis of the United Nations system on the prevention of armed conflicts and the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel.

My delegation supports the clear link made in the Secretary-General's report between international peace and stability and the promotion of sustainable economic and social development. In an increasingly globalized world, achieving sustainable peace demands the increased attention of our Organization. While the forces of globalization have resulted in extraordinary improvements in the lives of many, we have to face the challenges presented by this phenomenon, including the growing digital divide between the North and the South and increasing levels of poverty and social inequality, compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. An effective and timely response to these challenges will ultimately constitute a yardstick for assessing the effectiveness of the United Nations.

The Millennium Summit provided a unique and historic occasion to articulate a common vision for a United Nations of the twenty-first century. Although remarkable progress has been made, there can be no question that much remains to be done to secure the universal values of liberty and tolerance and the culture of non-violence to which we aspire. In the face of the continued threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and the new scourges of terrorism, international crime and illicit traffic in narcotics and small arms, our collective efforts to promote the ideals and principles of the United Nations Charter must be maintained and strengthened.

It is in this context that I turn to the problems of peacekeeping, peace-building and development. It is clear that peace operations no longer involve merely separating warring parties and monitoring ceasefire agreements. As noted by the Secretary-General in his report, they are a far more extensive and complex undertaking involving disarmament, demobilization of combatants, monitoring of human rights, and institutional and legal reforms. We therefore express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for establishing the Panel on Peace Operations, chaired by Ambassador Brahimi. We wish to thank the Panel for its insightful and practical recommendations.

Jamaica fully concurs that stronger political and financial support for the Organization, rapid deployment standards and improved technical support for peace operations are essential. The recommendations by the Brahimi Panel deserve serious and careful consideration, and we hope that they will be fully addressed during this session of the General Assembly.

I wish to note the emphasis placed in the Brahimi report on the issue of the prevention of armed conflicts, as my delegation believes that addressing the root causes of conflict merits primary attention and represents the most effective approach to achieving sustainable peace and security.

In this context, my delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's call last year for us to move to a "culture of prevention", as we believe that the prevention of conflicts must be the key focus in the maintenance of international peace. The international community must convert the fruits of the dialogue on the prevention of conflict into an effective course of action for the twenty-first century. A careful examination of the root causes of conflict suggests that the answers will not be easy to come by. Already radical initiatives, such as the move in the Security Council to boldly challenge the sinister relationships between armed conflict and illicit trade in diamonds and other natural resources, point to a new and more systematic approach to the prevention of conflict.

During Jamaica's presidency of the Security Council in July 2000, an open debate on the prevention of armed conflict allowed members and non-members of the Council to again discuss and identify practical initiatives to enhance the role of the Council in the prevention of conflicts. The presidential statement issued following the debate underlined the need for an in-depth consideration of the issue and provided the mandate for a report which the Secretary-General will present in May 2001.

The other issue which my delegation wishes to address at this time is the protection of United Nations and associated personnel. On 25 September, members of the staff of the United Nations and members of delegations paused for the annual observance of Staff Day. Regrettably, this provided a sad reminder that over the past year some 65 peacekeepers and civilian staff of the United Nations had lost their lives while discharging their duties.

My delegation is deeply concerned about the continued attacks on humanitarian workers, and we recall with deep regret the recent brutal killing of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees staff in East Timor. The constant dangers faced by United Nations staff in the field highlight the urgency with which the safety and security of these persons must be addressed. It is a matter of concern that parties to armed conflict continue to disregard the rules of international humanitarian law and to place the lives of our staff in danger. Steps must be taken to prosecute and bring to justice those responsible for violence against United Nations and associated personnel.

The international community must, as a priority, strengthen international humanitarian and human rights standards. The Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel is an important contribution to the legal regime for the protection of humanitarian workers. With this in mind, Jamaica's Prime Minister, during the Millennium Summit, presented Jamaica's instrument of accession to this important Convention. We do believe, however, that the scope of application of this instrument should be expanded to cover locally recruited and other personnel not currently covered under the Convention.

The targeting of humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel is unacceptable, and we support the taking of measures to improve staff safety and to provide further training to all personnel engaged in humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. Every Member State has a responsibility to contribute to this process. Without the staff of the United Nations prepared to serve in dangerous situations, the work of the Organization would not be taken forward.

In conclusion, we commend the Secretary-General for his outstanding leadership of the Organization and thank him for the thought-provoking ideas expressed in his report entitled "Common destiny: a new resolve".

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): Tanzania commends the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization. We applaud his vision of the Organization, which defines its primary role as the promotion of collective action to meet the challenges that confront our shared humanity. The recently concluded Millennium Summit is a vindication of this vision. The Summit deliberations and the Declaration that was adopted were also a vindication of the critical role of the Organization in evolving, defining and articulating a global agenda. The Secretary-General and the Secretariat have had a significant role in that respect. We commend them, even as we call for a stronger rededication to the implementation of the agenda we have set for ourselves.

It is not our desire to comment on the report in its entirety. Others have done so, and we share many of the concerns raised, in particular those regarding the determination to strengthen worldwide peacekeeping operations. Our central focus is on Africa. The promotion of durable peace has to go hand in hand with the pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. For Africa this is a critical challenge. We bank on the United Nations to take the lead in helping Africa. While we know the challenge is primarily ours, international support is critical. This requires forging partnerships with the other Member States and the international community. Ultimately, an Africa that is at peace with itself and self-reliant will make significant contributions to world peace and development.

In paragraph 231 the report states:

> "The breadth and depth of United Nations involvement in Africa is extraordinary".

The involvement is a demonstration of the degree of commitment to African development. We appreciate that Africa has its own share of responsibilities. And indeed a lot is being done in all spheres.

What Africa now needs is concrete commitments for a new partnership. We are gratified that the Summit and the Declaration that it adopted provided a new high-level political commitment to the development of Africa. It now behoves the Organization and the Secretary-General to draw the attention of world public opinion to the new challenge of helping Africa equip itself with the tools necessary to compete in the global economy.

It is also for the Organization to further demonstrate its commitment to peace and sustainable development in Africa by giving momentum to dealing with the issues that impede Africa's competitiveness. The matters to be dealt with include poor resource flows, access to markets, debt relief, technology transfer and fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

On market access, while Africa is striving to increase the production of goods and services, it needs free and unhindered access for its products in the developed countries' markets.

We welcome the greater international awareness of the need to address the debt problem. In this regard, the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative is a welcome move, but more needs to be done to enable more countries — especially least developed countries — to qualify for HIPC funding. In addition, a comprehensive and durable solution to this problem has to be found.

The Secretary-General raises key questions concerning the complexity of preventing and resolving conflicts. At a time when the Organization is underfunded, the complexities become even more daunting. But some of the conflicts are only complicated by the Organization's own sense of limitations. It is our view that the even-handed application of policies and decisions will go a long way to instilling confidence in the Organization. Double standards should be avoided at all cost.

We are keenly conscious of the need to protect the peacekeepers who are deployed in the field. The recent tragedies in Sierra Leone are a grim reminder of the risks and dangers confronting peacekeeping operations. Caution is therefore justifiable. Here I join those who have called for strict adherence to the rules governing deployment in situations of conflict. But no two situations can be treated equally. Unlike the operation in Sierra Leone, all the parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo conflict have been calling for, indeed urging, the deployment of United Nations forces in the Congo. While caution is justified, as regards the Congo we appeal for a reassessment of

the decision made. Above all, the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be reassured that this Organization cares, that this Organization can overcome the constraints of its past tragedies in that territory in the interest of higher goals: peace, stability and development for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its people.

In paragraph 153 the Secretary-General refers to an important undertaking: the reaffirmation of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees as the universal foundation of refugee protection. There cannot be a nobler way of celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. We hope this anniversary will also be an occasion to evaluate the scope of the refugee phenomenon. The incidence of resettlement beyond camps of refugees who have not taken the option of acquiring citizenship in the host countries cannot continue to be ignored. For example, while the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees figure for refugees in Tanzania is close to half a million, the actual number residing in the country is close to a million. We appeal for a holistic approach to the refugee problem. To the host country all the refugees, whether in camps or with the people, do count.

And yet, as noted in paragraph 149, we continue to be one of the countries suffering the spillover effect of the instabilities in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The hospitality of our people is not without bounds. At times such hospitality has been rewarded by outrageous charges by the countries of origin. Our tolerance in some cases has been tested to the extreme. In rededicating ourselves to the 1951 Convention, we must also dedicate ourselves to a course of action that will not only address the root causes, but also redouble peacemaking efforts that will eventually lead to the return of refugees to their countries of origin. In the meantime, I take this opportunity to appeal for more assistance to refugees as well as to host countries.

In conclusion, we note that the Secretary-General identifies in paragraph 273 the establishment of the rule of law in international affairs as a central priority. For the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization, reform and expansion of the Security Council are imperative. The majority of us cannot repeatedly and without consequence call for the expansion of the membership of the Council without at some point bringing into serious question the credibility of the Organization as a major advocate of the rule of law.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): My delegation is happy that this year, as in the past three years, the Secretary-General was given the opportunity to introduce his report on the work of the Organization at the beginning of the general debate. This is a welcome arrangement, which should continue in the future.

My delegation is particularly happy that this year's report has identified issues that have the potential of challenging the international community in the coming years. My delegation had asked the Secretary-General to give attention to our suggestion to that effect.

The Secretary-General's report this year is readable and presents in a very user-friendly manner a broad picture of the various mandated activities of the world body. The focus on both substantive issues and issues relating to institutional reforms is appropriately balanced. This draws attention to the fact that both aspects require full and thorough consideration by the Member States in order for the United Nations to be effective and efficient.

Bangladesh finds it particularly useful that the Secretary-General offers his own assessment and suggests ways in which the international community can work together to better the lives of the people still left behind. My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General that the United Nations in many of its peace missions is charged with nothing less than helping rebuild shattered societies almost from scratch.

Bangladesh believes that peacekeeping in a broader context is an effective tool for conflict prevention. We strongly believe that peacekeeping operations should be carried out only under transparent political direction, a precise mandate of the United Nations and an effective command and control structure. In this context, we look forward to examining the recommendation made in the Brahimi Panel's Report (A/55/305).

My delegation finds it most appropriate that the Secretary-General argues for a shift from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. We also believe that this will be highly cost-effective both in human and in financial terms. We are encouraged to learn that within the United Nations system a prevention team has been set up by the Department of Political Affairs to watch over the conflict situations that may require preventive action.

We welcome the attention that the Secretary-General has given to natural disasters, as well as to violent conflicts, as events that pose serious challenges to the United Nations. His emphasis on the most basic principles of multilateralism and humanitarian ethics is absolutely relevant in this context.

The development mandate of the United Nations has special significance for Bangladesh. We are satisfied that due attention has been given to this aspect in the chapter entitled "Cooperating for development" in the report. My delegation is particularly happy to see that in this chapter the Secretary-General has emphasized the elimination of poverty worldwide and termed it the most important development goal of the United Nations.

In the section on bridging the digital divide, the Secretary-General's observation on narrowing the gap between rich and poor is commendable. We support the Secretary-General and encourage him to take steps in narrowing that digital divide.

Bangladesh is pleased that considerable attention has been given to accountability and oversight in the report. We encourage the continuation of this in the future. The monitoring of the reform process and the resulting improvements in its operations require the close attention of the Member States and should be reported upon regularly in a transparent manner.

Bangladesh welcomes the emphasis given in the report on the idea that peace, development and human rights are interrelated. The international community has been alerted to the human rights imperatives of its activities and initiatives. We would like the Secretary-General to devote some space in future reports to cover the activities relating to the promotion of the culture of peace, particularly linking it to the ongoing initiatives in various parts of the world involving civil society as a whole.

In conclusion, we would like to commend the Secretary-General again for his well-balanced report. We believe that the suggestions and ideas of Member States, as articulated in this debate, will continue to be reflected in future reports of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General for the comprehensive report he has submitted to us on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). His report covers a broad and deep range of problems facing the United Nations over the last few years, and the Secretary-General not only raises questions, he also offers us his vision of cooperation for the entire international community in order to improve the life of those who live on hope alone.

This important and basic document provides us with an additional and useful stimulus to ensure the effectiveness of the work of this session of the Assembly, which is taking place following the Millennium Summit. That Summit was unprecedented in the level and scope of representation. It was a milestone because of its political significance. That gathering of world leaders not only confirmed that the United Nations will continue to be the main focus for managing international relations in the twenty-first century but also undoubtedly strengthened the role of the United Nations and elevated its role to new heights in the world today.

Since joining the Organization, Tajikistan has given priority to strengthening the stabilizing role of the United Nations and has supported its rational reform so that it will be able to react quickly and appropriately to what is happening in the world. We have supported building up the United Nations potential to settle crises and conflicts as they emerge. Together with all interested States, we will continue to make our constructive contribution to strengthening the potential of this Organization.

We agree with the Secretary-General that there is no issue that requires greater attention and more resources than the attainment of peace and security for all countries and peoples. The varied, complex crises that have faced the United Nations in the last decade require an in-depth analysis of the current mechanisms available to the United Nations and reflection on appropriate ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of future peacekeeping operations.

In this connection, the report prepared under the leadership of Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi provides, on the basis of an objective analysis of peacekeeping experience, realistic assessments and well-thought-out recommendations, which we agree with overall. It is clear that peacekeeping missions will for a long time continue to be one of the main areas of activity of this Organization. In some parts of the world, the flames of new wars have broken out. New conflicts seem to emerge from the ashes of the old, and some have gone on for decades without being settled. The pain and

suffering of peoples demand stronger action from the international community to help them.

Advocating further strengthening of the peacekeeping potential of the United Nations, we believe that peacekeeping must be based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries. It must be timely and appropriate and focused on organizing collective action by the community of nations.

We must not forget that only the Security Council that has the exclusive right to authorize on behalf of the world community the use of force for the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security.

We believe that international law must prevail whatever the circumstances of a crisis. The settlement of the conflict in Tajikistan by political and diplomatic means, under United Nations auspices, provides a very clear example of the Organization's great potential to settle crises. In our view, it exemplifies what the Secretary-General has said about the growing importance of preventive diplomacy and about the need to strengthen a culture of conflict prevention. We agree with the report's view that the very nature of conflict has changed. The dirty money gained through illicit trafficking in weapons and in drugs often fuels conflict. Tajikistan shares the Secretary-General's concerns and will do its utmost to support efforts to combat illegal drug cultivation, production, trade and abuse — which are linked also to terrorism.

In that context, the regional plan of action adopted in mid-September by the "six plus two" group, with the support of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, is of great importance. Owing to its scope and trans-border character, the drug threat from Afghanistan to the Central Asian region is so serious that no State can counter it alone. We believe that implementation of the plan, with serious ongoing support from the main donors, would make a real contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of joint international efforts to counter the growing drug threat. The Secretary-General makes this point in his report.

In his report, the Secretary-General writes also about various aspects of globalization. To varying degrees, we are all enjoying the benefits of globalization and are suffering from the problems it creates. We agree with the report that virtually the entire developing world is concerned about the consequences of globalization. Tajikistan believes that the United Nations must do more to promote ways to narrow the development gulf between rich and poor States. We shall be preparing actively for the High-level Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development to be held in 2001, to which the report makes reference. We hope that we will be able during the preparatory process to move towards resolving problems related to the excessive debt burden weighing on developing countries, many of which have recently experienced conflicts and devastating natural disasters. Tajikistan welcomes the increasing attention to this matter on the part of the Secretary-General, the donor community and the international financial institutions.

My Government believes that easing the debt burden will release internal resources for use in education and health care, in dealing with the aftermath of conflict, in addressing environmental issues and in reacting effectively to natural disasters.

We welcome the heightened emphasis on environmental issues. A great deal has been done in recent years on those issues, as detailed in the report. The vast scope of the problems touched upon in the report made it impossible for the Secretary-General to deal in detail with one issue of growing importance: fresh water. Water, obviously, is life, and it will constitute one of the main world-wide challenges for the twenty-first century. Today, more than a billion people lack adequate access to safe drinking water; five million die each year from water-borne diseases. This problem arises in all continents. It could be said that half of the world's water resources have already been exhausted. Unless a vast effort is made to deal with the problem of water, it could become a major source of conflict. By 2050, it will be impossible to meet the fresh-water needs of more than half of the world's population. Only by working together will we be able to solve this problem. The timing of the second World Water Forum, held this year at The Hague, was no accident. Drinking water must be made available to all people at a price they can afford. This is among the goals of the United Nations; it is a key to resolving many issues.

We shall not now speak of all the matters touched on in the report, but will state our views during the debate on individual agenda items.

Let me conclude by reaffirming our entire support for the work of the Secretary-General. Tajikistan firmly

believes that the United Nations is absolutely essential. It has great strength and great potential. We believe that joint efforts by the Members of the United Nations will further strengthen the Organization and will enable it to realize that potential. The hopes and aspirations of the world's peoples are focused on the United Nations.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): I should like at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his insightful report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). It is a comprehensive document and provides us with an overall view of the role of the United Nations in dealing with the myriad issues that are of concern and interest to Member States, along with proposals for further strengthening the Organization's functioning and improving its efficiency.

As the report makes clear, security continues to be a concern of the international community, as long-standing conflicts persist and new ones erupt, often exacerbated by ethnic and religious differences and fuelled by illicit trafficking in arms. These are major challenges to international peace and security. There is thus a clear need to augment global and regional mechanisms for conflict prevention. In that regard, we are gratified to note the steps that have already been taken and those that are under consideration to prevent armed conflicts in the future.

Peacekeeping and peacemaking have now become more complex and demanding. This led to a major review by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, whose recommendations warrant our serious consideration with a view to further strengthening those operations. In view of the indispensable role of the Organization in these activities, it has become imperative to search for ways and means to ensure stable logistical and financial support. All aspects of United Nations activities have faced financial constraints in recent years, but none have faced such severe constraints as the Organization's peacekeeping missions. It is beyond doubt that the current arrangements for financing these activities are inadequate and unreliable. They place the heaviest burden on the developing countries that contribute troops, which discourages participation. Indonesia fully recognizes that implementation of the Panel's recommendations will depend to a considerable degree on the availability of additional resources and on the resolution of numerous other interrelated issues. Equally important, peacekeeping operations should be non-intrusive and non-interventionist in nature.

This issue has again been raised in the Secretary-General's report, which has acknowledged that many States have serious and legitimate concerns about intervention for whatever reasons. Hence, the question of international intervention continues to be controversial, as it impinges on the critical issue of foreign intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States. The recent debates have underscored how far we are from reaching a consensus. But those deliberations have marked the beginnings of a healthy dialogue and have focused our attention on providing the best care in times of humanitarian emergencies. From Indonesia's viewpoint, humanitarian assistance can only be rendered by the United Nations or any other organization following a request by the State concerned, or at a minimum with its express approval. To contemplate otherwise would threaten the very foundation of the United Nations, which has always upheld the sanctity of the sovereign State as essential to international security and cooperation.

As a long-time proponent of a regional approach to disarmament, my delegation is gratified to note that the validity of this approach is acknowledged in the report. In general, we believe that both global and regional approaches to disarmament compliment each other and should be pursued simultaneously.

As regards other disarmament issues identified in the report, the real cause for stalemate is the untenable approaches adopted by some countries in the post-cold-war era. Obviously, if the expectations of the international community are to be fulfilled, negotiations must be pursued with the serious political commitment of the nuclear-weapon States. Questions have constantly been raised as to the commitment of those States to fulfil their obligations. The challenge today and in the future is to ensure the full implementation of all the provisions of all the Treaties by all of the States parties.

The question of illicit traffic in small arms alluded to in the report has acquired urgency in the post-cold-war era as civilians have become intentional targets. The linkage of children to violence is poignant and is due largely to the availability of such arms. They have placed the safety of societies and the security of States in jeopardy. Various initiatives have already been taken at the regional and subregional levels in

stemming the illegal flow of small arms. The success of the forthcoming international conference will depend upon resolving a multiplicity of interrelated issues, including the root causes of conflicts, State control over security, arms supplies and illicit activities, the link of the small arms traffic with drug trafficking and terrorism, the reintegration of former combatants into unified armed forces and confidence-building measures.

The report also touches upon the harmful impact of sanctions on the civilians of the targeted countries and neighbouring States whose trade and commercial relations are disrupted without compensation and to the detriment of their economy. Sanctions are blunt instruments and, when imposed indefinitely, have served no useful purpose in achieving their objectives. They should be subjected to periodic review and terminated when their objectives are attained. Such an approach would ensure future support for the imposition and the implementation of sanctions regimes. Indonesia considers that the issue of humanitarian assistance, either in regard to natural disasters or conflict situations, should be considered in a balanced manner. We agree with the Secretary-General's view that an international response to the situation of internally displaced persons should be designed in collaboration with the Government in each affected country. Furthermore, it is our view that the central premise of the policy is that the responsibility for a humanitarian response lies first and foremost with the national Government and that such assistance should be based on the request of the Government concerned, while fully respecting State sovereignty.

My delegation would like to underline the important progress that has been made in improving coordination within the United Nations system in its response to humanitarian emergencies. The situation in Mozambique earlier this year, which drew an immediate response from the General Assembly and also the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is one example of the success that can be achieved through timely action.

Indonesia has always been committed to strengthening its national human rights mechanisms and to effectively promoting and protecting human rights at all levels. We take note of the new developments in the work and the mechanisms of human rights bodies, as indicated in the report. In that regard, we consider it important to note that what is required foremost is to make optimal use of existing human rights bodies by reviewing their procedures with a view to avoiding unnecessary overlapping of activities.

Regarding social issues, Indonesia agrees with the Secretary-General that the special session of the General Assembly reached an agreement on sensitive social development issues and resulted in commitments to social development. In particular, we were encouraged by the attention that was given to emerging issues, such as the impact of globalization and the prospects for the future. In this regard, my delegation would like to express its sincere wish that that special session does not end as an exercise in rhetoric, but will help restore momentum for social development.

Finally, on the issue of women, Indonesia also welcomes the outcome of the Special Session of the General Assembly for the Beijing + 5 Review. In particular, the prominence that is being given to the issue of violence against women has strengthened that process. We would note, however, that given the significance that should be attached to the five-year reviews, it was perhaps too ambitious to hold two special sessions in the same month and same year.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): I would like through you, Mr. Acting President, to offer my delegation's congratulations to the new President of our General Assembly. We look forward to working with him and his team, as we enjoyed and appreciated working with his respective predecessor.

I would also like to join with those other delegations that have expressed their appreciation for the Secretary-General's excellent report contained in document A/55/1. This report contains an eloquent account of how the United Nations has confronted major challenges over the past year in pursuing the objectives of sustainable peace and security.

Indeed, through our own contributions to United Nations peace operations, and especially through our commitment of troops and civilian experts to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, we have some small understanding of the extent and complexity of the activities being undertaken by the United Nations today. It is essential that all of us join with the Secretary-General in helping to strengthen the Organization's capacities in this area, including by acting upon the Brahimi Panel's key recommendations.

The Secretary-General has noted that many of the questions surrounding humanitarian intervention and national sovereignty, which he first posed last year, remain unanswered. Our own impression is that there is some polarization among the membership that needs to be put aside if the Organization is to move forward. Yet the debate raises important issues that warrant careful reflection, and we believe it is essential to work towards a consensus on improved ways of dealing with situations in which universally accepted human rights are being violated on a massive scale. At the same time, we see no inherent contradiction between intervention and national sovereignty in terms of the United Nations Charter. Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter makes clear that there are circumstances where Member States do not have exclusive jurisdiction over their domestic affairs, in particular in the case of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. In other words, the Charter provides that measures to preserve international peace and security can override State sovereignty. National sovereignty is therefore not an absolute.

If there is new ground to be broken in order to improve the Organization's ability to respond more effectively, it probably lies, in part at least, in the domain of the Security Council, which has the task of determining threats to the peace or breaches of it. The main impediment, as we see it, to the Security Council's taking concerted action to try to end massive human rights abuses, including in the recent cases of Rwanda and Kosovo, has been shown to lie in its decision-making processes. I refer, of course, to the veto, by which the will of the wider membership of the Organization can be continually frustrated. As we know, the veto is omnipresent in negotiations in the Council, even if it is less frequently deployed formally these days.

The Secretary-General refers in his report to developments in the South Pacific region, where the United Nations has become more involved recently. As one of the contributing countries to the Peace Monitoring Group in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, I want to pay tribute to the very fine work being done by the United Nations Political Office, which comprises just three substantive staff, in helping further the peace process. The Secretary-General also makes the point that sustainable peace and prosperity can only be assured in Fiji if the aspirations of all the peoples of Fiji, regardless of race, are taken into account and all its citizens can play a meaningful role in the political and economic life of the country. Finally, he calls our attention to Solomon Islands, where Australia and New Zealand, working with the Solomon Islands Government, are helping to lay the ground for peace talks among ethnic factions.

Finally, before leaving peace and security issues, may I express our strong support for the Secretary-General's observation that future sanctions regimes should be designed to maximize pressure on the target to comply with United Nations resolutions, while minimizing their effects on the innocent.

The Secretary-General, in his chapter on development, deals with many of the issues that received the greatest priority from our Heads of State and Government during the Millennium Summit. He refers, for instance, to the concerns of many countries, especially in the developing world, regarding globalization. We will be particularly interested to learn of any mechanism the Secretary-General has in mind to enable him to fulfil the comprehensive responsibility accorded him by heads of State and Government under paragraph 31 of the Millennium Declaration.

Finally, my delegation is very pleased to see from the Secretary-General's report that important administrative reforms, such as results-based-budgeting, are being taken up imminently by the appropriate Main Committee. We hope that there will be good progress during this session on some of the unfinished business remaining from the Secretary-General's 1997 management reform package. We note with satisfaction that encouraging progress has indeed been made, in particular in the complex area of human resources reform. Sustaining meritorious performance from staff and managing them capably are fundamental to the Organization's success. We believe this area has rightly been given top priority by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his detailed report on the work of the Organization. We fully agree with the Secretary-General that it is time that we translate into action the commitments made at the level of heads of State and Government during the Millennium Summit. It is in that spirit that the Pakistan delegation looks forward to working in partnership with other

delegations and the Secretariat with a view to implementing the decisions of the Summit.

The two main themes that pervaded the discussion during the Millennium Summit were peace and security, and development and poverty eradication. Those themes also form the focus of the Secretary-General's report. In our view, they constitute the two central challenges to the United Nations in the new millennium. Durable peace cannot flourish in the absence of sustainable development. Development is unsustainable in the absence of peace. Peace requires both the prevention of conflicts and the resolution of existing disputes.

If we look around us, we can see that new conflicts have taken root in different parts of the world while many outstanding disputes continue to fester. The Secretary-General has called for a shift from what he calls a culture of reaction to one of prevention, one that is highly cost-effective in both human and financial terms. One can only agree with such an approach. However, for conflict prevention to be effective and credible, it must be applied to all situations, and root causes must be effectively addressed. Here, too, commitment must be translated into action.

The Security Council is charged under the Charter to uphold and strengthen international peace and security. In fulfilling that mandate, it must act in a uniform manner, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and its decisions. There must be no selectivity. Nor should the Council be used as a forum to vent narrow prejudices. Otherwise, it will run the risk of eroding the confidence of the international community in the United Nations.

The Charter also empowers the Secretary-General to undertake preventive diplomacy through the use of his good offices. We would encourage him to continue to use this authority, with a view to promoting the peaceful settlement of ongoing disputes and the prevention of potential conflicts.

The General Assembly should also give consideration not only to the development and strengthening of its own role in support of peace and security but also to the reinforcement of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as an impartial mechanism for the pacific settlement of disputes.

For the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities, it must have adequate resources available to it on a predictable basis. The Secretary-General has to be provided with the tools to effectively implement the tasks mandated in the areas of peace-making, peacekeeping, conflict prevention and peace-building. Here, I would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi and members of the high-level Panel on their report on how to strengthen the United Nations capacity in these vital areas. We look forward to receiving and discussing the Secretary-General's implementation plan based on the recommendations contained in that report.

The Secretary-General has invited our attention again to the "dilemma of intervention", while reminding us of the tragedies of Rwanda and Srebrenica. My delegation had the occasion to comment on the concept of humanitarian intervention in detail during our discussions last year, as well as during the discussions on the subject in the Security Council. At the time, we had been calling for a careful and detailed consideration of the concept. We had also identified certain fundamental parameters within which such a concept could have been studied. I will, therefore, not repeat them now. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize our willingness to enter into a discussion on this important issue.

The General Assembly and the Security Council must strengthen the international regime established to effectively prevent crimes against humanity. Countries that are guilty of systematic and gross violation of human rights and international humanitarian law and that bludgeon a people into submission must not go unpunished. The shameless practice of State terrorism and brutal repression against a people to prevent them from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination must be brought to an end through concerted international action. The perpetrators of these crimes must be made to respect the Charter principles and Security Council resolutions and punished for their refusal to do so. They do not deserve a place in the comity of nations. Article 6 of the Charter clearly provides for such cases. The display of double standards in this regard by our Organization towards identical situations around the world would only serve to undermine the authority of the United Nations in the eyes of suppressed peoples.

Here, I specifically refer to the relentless campaign of repression against the people in Indian-

occupied Jammu and Kashmir, where we witness the true face of what is called the largest democracy in the world revealed as a blatant violator of rather than an adherent to the immutable principles of democracy that it so dearly and unabashedly seeks to champion. The continued suppression of the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people cannot be obfuscated by India's hollow professions of democracy. The United Nations must fulfil its promise to the Kashmiri people consecrated in the Security Council resolutions. What is at stake is the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations system of dispute resolution and conflict prevention. Also at stake is peace and security in South Asia, which today is the most volatile region in the world. The root cause of all problems afflicting this region, with serious implications for global peace and security, is the unresolved dispute of Jammu and Kashmir. Peace in this region is contingent upon a just settlement of this dispute, which concerns the destiny of 10 million people. It is not a territorial dispute. It is a dispute involving the fate of 10 million people. Also contingent upon the early settlement of this longstanding dispute is the socio-economic well-being of one quarter of humanity, which inhabits South Asia.

Development and poverty eradication are equally daunting challenges. While we seek to strengthen the United Nations capacity in the areas of peace-keeping and conflict prevention, we must also strengthen international cooperation for the promotion of sustainable development and the elimination of poverty world-wide. As I mentioned earlier, sustainable and equitable growth are essential for durable peace and stability.

It is generally agreed that globalization has not been without its negative consequences. It has widened the economic divide between the North and the South and deepened the gap between the rich and the poor. The United Nations, as the most representative and universal body, is uniquely placed to ensure an even spread of the benefits of globalization to all nations and peoples.

The present international financial and trade architecture has failed to meet the challenges of development and poverty eradication. The Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) must reform and adapt themselves to the new requirements of sustainable and global growth.

The fact that the number of people worldwide living in abject poverty has increased is a clear signal of the imbalances and bias in the current global financial and trading system. The 1997 Asian financial crisis served to underscore the continuing vulnerability of countries seeking sustainable development in such a global environment.

Official development assistance has progressively declined. On the other hand, the agenda of United Nations specialized agencies is being revised away from the goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication. During the Millennium Summit, all heads of State and Government agreed to halve the proportion of people living on $1 a day by 2015. We must now come forward with the necessary means and resources to achieve that goal. The forthcoming high-level event on financing for development will be an important opportunity for Member States, along with other relevant actors and stakeholders, to chart a course for the mobilization of adequate resources for development, trade, development assistance and debt relief.

Sustainable development and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive. Both require adequate resources. The commitments made in Rio in 1992 towards resource mobilization have yet to materialize. In their absence, the goal of environmental protection will remain elusive.

The information and communication revolution has yielded many new opportunities. At the same time, it has given rise to the digital divide. It is a gap that needs to be bridged if the vast majority of the world's peoples are to derive benefits from these new technologies.

The developing countries continue to be heavily burdened by external debt — a burden that militates against their efforts to achieve sustainable development. Some innovative measures need to be taken to provide relief to indebted countries. During the Millennium Summit, the Chief Executive of Pakistan proposed that resources presently devoted by indebted countries to debt servicing might be diverted to social-sector development, focusing particularly on their education, health-care and social welfare programmes.

The challenge of economic development and poverty eradication is most acute in Africa, coupled with simmering conflicts in that region. The

international community needs to give special attention to the economic and security situation obtaining in that continent. Similarly, the special needs of small island developing States and of landlocked countries require special attention and responses.

The Secretary-General has called for a Global Compact to meet the challenges of development and environmental protection through the observance of "good practices" by the private sector based on shared values among the broader international community. We are fully conscious of and recognize the need to engage the private sector in partnerships. However, for the Compact to succeed, it is essential that it enjoy the trust and confidence of Member States.

To meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, the United Nations must undergo a change in order to reflect the universal character of the Organization. This is particularly true in the case of the Security Council, which needs to be made more democratic, representative, transparent and effective.

An effort is being made to create the perception that the majority of the membership favours the realization by a few States of their great power ambitions. In reality, it is the reverse. During the Millennium Summit and the general debate, we repeatedly heard calls from this very podium for the democratization of the Security Council and not for the creation of new centres of power and privilege, which would aggravate the existing imbalances. The reform process will not be complete unless the working methods and decision-making of the Security Council are brought into conformity with the principle of sovereign equality.

We must rise to meet the tasks mandated to us by our heads of State and Government. We must effectively respond to the challenges that confront us. It is only through a reinvigorated and adequately equipped United Nations that we can hope to collectively realize our shared objectives.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): My delegation wishes to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his thoughtful report on the work of the Organization, which we are considering today. The report covers a comprehensive range of issues. We are pleased with the broad coverage and careful treatment of many critical issues in the report. On many of these issues, we share the concerns of the Secretary-General and we make our own his appeal for the speedy consideration and implementation of the recommendations contained in the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations.

The Namibian delegation is pleased that, in addition to the more traditional areas of United Nations concern, such as international peace and security, humanitarian activities, development cooperation and human rights, the report addresses other important issues, including the bridging of the digital divide, HIV/AIDS, social development, the advancement of women, poverty eradication and development finance.

In this intervention, I will limit myself to four issues highlighted in the Secretary-General's report that are of particular importance to my delegation.

First, we agree with the Secretary-General that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is a serious development issue. In addition, we believe that the AIDS pandemic represents a real threat to peace and security on the African continent, as was agreed during a recent historic Security Council debate on the impact of this dreaded disease on the security situation of the affected African countries. Many startling statistics are available to describe the real situation on the ground.

In view of the fact that next week we will debate the issue of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and in view of the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly, I wish to make only a few preliminary comments. Given the magnitude of the pandemic, I think it is only proper that the General Assembly address and urgently adopt concrete action to tackle this scourge. It is long overdue for this body to deal with the matter and set the exact dates for the special session. It is also important that the preparatory process and the special session should be inclusive.

My delegation strongly believes that adequate funding should be provided to both the preparatory process and the special session itself. This requires strong political commitment from all Member States, and I believe that commitment may have to be demonstrated in the Fifth Committee soon.

Secondly, development and poverty eradication are issues of tremendous importance to the United Nations and all individual countries. My delegation appreciates the succinct presentation of this subject in the Secretary-General's report in the context of globalization and other challenges facing the developing countries. Namibia maintains that there is an urgent need to review and redesign the basic

paradigm of globalization itself. We look forward to an early opportunity to discuss this matter further.

For now, we would like to stress that development and poverty eradication should be addressed in the context of the commitments made by our heads of State or Government in the Millennium Declaration. In addition, the Namibian delegation would want to see a closer link established henceforth between the commitments of the Millennium Declaration and the upcoming High-level Event on Financing for Development.

Namibia will participate actively in preparations for this important international event, which must fully take into account the needs of all developing countries. Furthermore, this event will be an occasion to take a fresh look at the recommendations and commitments of all the major United Nations conferences of the past decade. Representatives are aware that many worthy recommendations emanating from those conferences remain unimplemented for want of resources. All of these considerations must provide a relevant point of departure for the work of the Preparatory Committee of the High-level Event on Financing for Development.

International peace and security remain elusive, especially on the African continent. In this respect, we could not agree more with the Secretary-General on the issues and problems he raises on this subject in the section of his report dealing with peacekeeping and peace-building. In this connection, my delegation joins others that have spoken before it in calling for the early consideration of the Brahimi report. We also urge the speedy implementation of many core recommendations contained in that report.

Namibia also shares the concerns of the Secretary-General expressed in paragraphs 31 through 37 of the report under consideration. However, as the Foreign Minister of Namibia, Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, stated before the Assembly during the general debate,

> "Namibia remains unconvinced and will continue to oppose any form of unilateral humanitarian intervention outside the Charter". *(A/55/PV.24)*

We believe that the provisions of the Charter provide an adequate framework to deal with the types of problems contemplated in paragraph 37 of the report under consideration. Furthermore, we note the initiative of Canada for the establishment of an independent commission on humanitarian intervention. However, we maintain that the General Assembly itself should remain seized of this issue until a satisfactory outcome is reached.

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 30 of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which the heads of State or Government reaffirmed the centrality of the General Assembly and called for it to play that role effectively. In that context, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia made some practical proposals to assist in this matter. We would be pleased to see any initiatives that the General Assembly may want to take in respect of considering those proposals.

My delegation is ready to participate in any discussion relating to this and other matters raised earlier. We also stand ready to cooperate fully with the President of the General Assembly and to continue supporting him in his endeavours.

Mr. Stuart (Australia): One of the worthwhile results of the Millennium Summit is that the Declaration has given us an agenda to work on. This features a number of goals for tasks that ought to be quite central to the way the United Nations develops as an Organization in this new century. Some of these goals have been put in the form of simply stated targets, including a common resolution that by the year 2015 we shall halve the proportion of the world's people whose daily income is less than one dollar; achieve universal primary-school education; and reduce the rate of maternal mortality by three quarters.

My delegation accepts the inclusion of such targets as a readily understood way of encapsulating what we, the Member States, agree to be core challenges for the United Nations of promoting development, poverty alleviation and individual welfare. The utility of these targets is both as benchmarks against which we can measure the results of the collective effort of United Nations Member States to cooperate in these areas, and as a succinct, unequivocal message of our intentions and priorities.

The elimination of poverty is an aspect of the United Nations work which features in Chapter III of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization. Indeed, the Secretary-General presents it as the most important development goal of the United Nations. Based on the estimate in the report of the number of people trying to survive on less than a dollar a day, our Millennium Summit target will require a

change from 1.2 billion people living on or below that level to 600 million people. This is a daunting figure — but we should not be deterred, as experience, for example, in several East Asian countries has shown that strong economic growth over a generation can have a major impact on poverty levels. Nonetheless, setting such a target does beg the question, just what should the United Nations do to help realize this change?

The Secretary-General's report recognizes the importance of translating commitments into effective action. My delegation certainly agrees with its observations that "the promotion of sustainable and equitable growth" is the most important means for making progress towards the poverty target, and that this is tied to open markets and stable legal and regulatory institutions to facilitate the operation of such markets. Overall, however, the relevant section of the report is rather thin on specific suggestions for action.

Accordingly, my delegation believes that one of the tasks we should set for ourselves in this session of the General Assembly is to identify what more the United Nations could do to promote the levels of economic growth that could generate such a significant fall in levels of poverty, including by considering how to encourage the removal of constraints to growth in developing countries.

These constraints are both external and internal. Externally, we should address the need for an equitable, rules-based, non-discriminatory system for international trade and financing. Increased and fairer access to markets, and a removal of the distortions to international trade that flow from continuing trade barriers and export subsidies, would be a major impetus to the kind of growth levels needed to approach the Summit target. Broad-based multilateral negotiations have proven the best way of delivering a more equitable, open and predictable trading environment, and for this reason Australia has been a strong advocate for the early launch of a new, market-access-focused round of multilateral trade negotiations. Such a round is needed not only to further trade liberalization but also to ensure that there is no going back on existing commitments. In particular, it is important that negotiations produce the conditions in which developing countries benefit more equitably from increased trade and overall growth of the world economy. For this to happen, market openings must be available in areas where developing countries have export potential and the capacity to supply competitively. And with this in mind, it is vital that agricultural trade be put on a more equitable footing.

According to the annual report of the Organization for Cooperation and Development (OECD) on agricultural policies, total agricultural support in OECD countries reached $361 billion in 1999. That is seven times as much as the development assistance OECD countries provided to developing countries. Farm protection has returned to levels not seen for more than a decade. In particular, export subsidies for agriculture are the most pernicious and trade-distorting of all forms of support, which is precisely why they have not been permitted for industrial exports for 40 years.

One of the most significant of the internal constraints to growth which we suggest the Assembly address is the impact that national policies and institutions have on development. This was recognized during the recently concluded General Assembly session in the resolution adopted on globalization, which resolution underlined the importance of

> "governance responsive to the needs of the people based on efficient, participatory, transparent and accountable public service, policy-making processes and administration". *(resolution 54/231, para. 10)*

Respect for the role, and the rights, of individuals and of families is also an essential concomitant of a flourishing market-based economy. We believe that while the United Nations and its agencies have a role to play in helping to strengthen good governance as an element of sustainable and equitable development, there is also no substitute for action by Governments.

Another aspect of fostering economic development mentioned in the Secretary-General's report is financing. In considering how to implement our Summit goals, next year's high-level event on financing for development is an important element. Australia will continue to contribute actively and constructively to the preparatory work for this event.

The Secretary-General's report describes some of the work done over the last 12 months in the United Nations system in considering the relationship between globalization and the eradication of poverty. Some worthwhile ideas have emerged from meetings between

the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions and from discussions within the Council. For the most part, these discussions have reflected a realistic appreciation of the role and limitations of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations. Yet we still hear the occasional argument that indicates that the United Nations can in some way roll back the tide of global change. It cannot. Rather its role should be to help its Member States identify and address both the challenges and opportunities of globalization. Simplistic formulas linking these changes with poverty or inequality will not take us far — and they may well be misleading, as in the past 10 years the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty has, according to one reliable measure, in fact fallen from 28 to 24 per cent.

What is important in the globalization debate in this General Assembly is to focus on action where the United Nations can make a difference. The Secretary-General's report notes that "steady progress" is being made in improving the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations operational performance. My delegation sees this as a much more fruitful area for cooperation than pursuing quixotic and unworkable proposals for international taxes. In particular, while encouraged by the experience to date of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, we would like to see this model for coordination of country programmes among United Nations agencies become a standard approach. We also strongly support the move within the United Nations funds and programmes towards results-based budgeting. This increased focus on achieving and demonstrating results will not only attract greater funding, but will also ensure that those funds are best used to support the goals in the Summit Declaration.

The above will, I hope, give delegations a good sense of Australia's views of some areas warranting attention in pursuing the agenda set out in the Millennium Summit. Other priorities for us on issues relating to development and humanitarian assistance will include the following. One of these priorities is seeing how we can step up international efforts to stop and ultimately reverse the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We would also like to boost early preparations for the ten-year follow-up conference to United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as we would like to see the groundwork laid for a worthy follow-up to the Rio conference. We also wish for consideration of oceans-related issues to progress. This would include consolidating the very successful inaugural meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea and addressing some pressing issues relating to fishing practices through resolutions of the General Assembly. My delegation is also interested in touching on water security, including the proposal, which Australia supports, for an international year of freshwater, and practical means of pursuing such elements of the Millennium Summit as the target of halving the proportion of people with no access to safe drinking water.

I have concentrated much of my attention today to issues of poverty alleviation, an issue that Australia believes is very much a core issue for the United Nations system. To conclude, however, I would like to offer some more general comments on how the Millennium Summit might inform our work at this session.

The Secretary-General's report is, as usual, a useful survey of United Nations activities. And as usual it covers a very wide range of activities carried out by the United Nations system. The Summit has, however, given us an exceptional opportunity to give more impetus and focus to the work of the Organization. The impetus derives from the extraordinary attendance at the Summit of the great majority of national leaders. The focus can be drawn from the Summit Declaration, which has given us a road map for our work within the United Nations and has given us guidance on priorities. This latter element is fundamental. The United Nations cannot do everything. Now we have made progress on establishing those areas where the United Nations does have an indispensable role, it is up to delegations to make sure that the resources and efforts of the Organization are geared to achieving them.

Naturally my delegation's priorities include a number of areas I have not mentioned. Some are reflected in the statements made by the Australian Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister at the Summit and in the general debate respectively. We share the strong interest that many have expressed here in practical reforms, including to update the composition of the Security Council, reconfigure the electoral groups and increase the United Nations peacekeeping capacity along the lines of the recommendations in the

Brahimi report. We will again be pursuing vigorously work in the areas of disarmament, and a number of aspects covered in chapter IV of the Secretary-General's report — the chapter on "The international legal order and human rights".

My delegation looks forward to working with the delegations of other Member States in an effort to give practical effect to the goals set out in the Summit Declaration. We are conscious that we are not starting from scratch. There is a considerable foundation of achievements, programmes and operations on which we can build. We do not need to reinvent the wheel, but we should be prepared to try doing things differently so that the United Nations responds to contemporary challenges as effectively as possible.

Ms. Enkhtsetseg (Mongolia): At the outset, I would like to express my Government's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his annual report (A/55/1), which covers broad aspects of the Organization's work carried out in the past 12 months. The report contains many useful ideas and proposals aimed at further promoting the Organization's work in specific fields. My delegation would like to assure the President of the General Assembly that Mongolia will cooperate with the Secretary-General and fellow Member States to make this Organization stronger and more efficient in pursuit of the noble goals and principles enshrined in its Charter.

With regard to enhancing the role of the United Nations, my delegation would like to underline the importance of the recent United Nations Millennium Summit and its outcome. The Millennium Declaration adopted at the Summit not only reiterated the commitment of the international community to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, but it also reaffirmed its readiness to reshape the activities of the Organization in the spirit of the evolution that characterizes today's world. As the Secretary-General has rightly pointed out in his report, it is now time, at this session of the General Assembly, for us to roll up our sleeves and start putting into action the bold pledges made during the Summit, pledges that are challenging yet nevertheless achievable.

Since consideration of this agenda item should not be a second general debate, I would limit my statement to the following points.

In the Millennium Declaration world leaders have solemnly reaffirmed that

> "the United Nations is the indispensable common house of the entire human family, through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development".

Implementation of the Millennium Declaration implies pursuing further the reform of the United Nations, including restoration of the General Assembly's important role as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations, reforming the Security Council, enhancing the role of the Economic and Social Council and better coordination of United Nations activities with international financial institutions.

Reform of the United Nations is a continuing process. It is well under way and is yielding results in some areas. However, the effort to reform the Security Council has not brought us closer to resolving one of the main issues: expansion of the Council to reflect present-day realities and to increase its effectiveness. We believe that the expansion of the Security Council should be made in both categories, permanent and non-permanent. A reasonable increase in the number of non-permanent seats should reflect the representative character of the Council and enable a growing number of Member States, including small States, to contribute to its work. The reform of the Council should also deal with the right of veto, which should be considerably curtailed.

As is seen in the Secretary-General's report, in recent years the demands for the peacekeeping and peace-building roles of the Organization have increased manifold. The lessons of Srebrenica, Rwanda and Sierra Leone made it abundantly clear that a thorough and critical review is needed to make peacekeeping operations succeed in meeting commitments under the Charter.

In this connection, the Mongolian delegation commends the work of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Ambassador Brahimi. The Panel's report (A/55/305) presents a frank analysis of the prevailing situation and a forthright recommendation for change. We share the view that the report deserves serious consideration and specific action even at this session of the General Assembly. With a view to increasing its direct contribution to peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, last year Mongolia signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Today, Mongolia has trained personnel ready to

participate in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, a special unit of Mongolia's armed forces has recently successfully participated in the United Nations-supported regional peacekeeping training exercise in Central Asia.

The reform of the United Nations should be judged in part by the role that the Organization could play in promoting developmental goals of its Members, especially of the small, vulnerable and least developed, and in overcoming and reducing poverty. In today's globalizing world this role is acquiring greater importance. In this connection, my delegation commends the positive role that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is playing in articulating the problems of landlocked developing countries, countries that due to their geographical location cannot compete fairly with others and that are forced to spend two to three times more to get access to world markets, thus losing whatever competitive edge they could have had otherwise.

Implementation of the decisions of the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development could help this group of countries tackle some of the difficulties mentioned above. My delegation hopes that the upcoming trilateral and ministerial meetings on the problems of landlocked developing countries will have a practical impact on reducing the enormous obstacles facing their development. Likewise, we also attach great importance to the forthcoming high-level conference on financing for development.

Turning briefly to the questions of security and disarmament, my delegation would like to express its support for the proposal of the Secretary-General to convene a major international conference aimed at identifying ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. We hope that this timely proposal will be given serious consideration at this session of the General Assembly.

Mongolia also believes that pending the conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty, the United Nations could establish a register for all stocks of weapons-grade fissile material. This would also help establish an important balance with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

All States, big and small alike, are expected to contribute to promoting and attaining the goals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Guided by that spirit, Mongolia is trying to turn its vast territory into a nuclear-weapon-free area. To this end, and in implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/77 D, it has undertaken a series of consultations with the five nuclear-weapon States on institutionalizing this status. As a result of these consultations, it is expected that the five permanent members of the Security Council will soon make a joint statement providing nuclear security assurances to Mongolia in connection with that status. This would be a concrete step in institutionalizing the status. We believe that strengthening other aspects of Mongolia's external security would make the status more credible and effective. A transparent, credible and stable security regime relating to Mongolia's status would be our contribution to the international efforts of promoting regional peace and security.

In conclusion, allow me to underline once again Mongolia's resolve to contribute actively to the work of the Organization in pursuit of its noble goals and objectives.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and insightful report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). The Millennium Summit held in this very Hall only three weeks ago was a historic event. It provided a rare opportunity for more than 170 world leaders to reach consensus on guiding principles to address daunting challenges in the new century. Now it is our responsibility to translate the summit Declaration into action.

I would also like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his continued interest in developments on the Korean peninsula. We take note of paragraph 58 of the report, in which the Secretary-General made reference to the Korean peninsula. We also share his view that a historic opportunity is unfolding on the Korean peninsula to resolve decades-old conflicts between South Korea and North Korea and thus to contribute to peace and stability in the region and beyond. I take this opportunity to express my Government's deep appreciation for the statement issued by the Co-Chairpersons of the Millennium Summit welcoming the inter-Korean summit and its follow-up measures (press release GA/SM/194, 6 September 2000).

We have recently witnessed a resurgence of United Nations peacekeeping operations in the face of

ever-increasing challenges around the globe, in particular in East Timor, the Balkans and Africa. The number of United Nations peacekeepers in the field has tripled, and United Nations peacekeeping operations seem to continue to be on the rise. The complexity of recent crisis situations requires peacekeeping operations to expand their scope beyond the traditional realm of peacekeeping. My delegation shares the view of the Secretary-General that peacekeeping and peace-building have become inseparably linked.

In that regard, we welcome the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, which we believe will be an important basis for deliberations aimed at making United Nations peacekeeping operations more effective and adequate in addressing future challenges. While reserving detailed comments for future occasions, I would like to make a few remarks with regard to the Brahimi report. In implementing many of the recommendations of the report, we should bear in mind their budgetary implications, among other things. We are of the view that the decision-making process of the Security Council should be more transparent. Countries contributing with troops or other important means should be given the opportunity, in one way or another, to participate in the decision-making process of the Council. In this context, briefings by the Secretariat should be made available outside the Security Council to contributing Member States, not only on matters affecting the security and safety of their own personnel, but also on all other matters related to peacekeeping operations. By doing that, we will be able to make peacekeeping operations more successful in the long run.

I would like to assure the Assembly that the Republic of Korea, which has joined the peacekeeping force in East Timor, will remain firmly committed to the cause and the activities of United Nations peacekeeping operations in the future.

At the dawn of the new millennium, information technology has facilitated the process of globalization. We all know that globalization presents tremendous potential for economic growth and poverty eradication. We should not underestimate its positive impact in terms of integrating the peoples of the world. However, more attention needs to be paid to mounting concerns over undesirable consequences of globalization, in particular in developing countries.

The United Nations certainly continues to take the lead in building a "digital bridge" enabling developing countries to join the information-technology revolution. My Government attaches particular importance to education in information and communication technologies, so it has provided developing countries with information-technology training programmes; it plans to expand those programmes in the future. We believe that the United Nations should do more to provide developing countries with training of that nature. More concerted action is required at the national, regional and international levels to bridge the digital divide. Furthermore, it has become clear that genuine partnership with major development stakeholders, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and the private sector, is increasingly vital. In that context, my delegation supports the creative initiative of the Secretary-General on a global compact, proposed last year, and recent developments in that regard.

Let me now turn to the successful outcome of the two special sessions to review and appraise the implementation of, respectively, the commitments made at the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development and at the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women towards the realization of a "society for all" in the new millennium. At those sessions, we all reaffirmed our commitment to put people at the centre of development. For development to be sustainable, it must be carried out with genuine respect for democracy and human rights. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Rights last April on the role of good governance in the promotion of human rights. My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General that that groundbreaking resolution links good governance with an environment conducive to the enjoyment of human rights and the promotion of human-centred development.

One of the most fundamental challenges this Organization faces is how to be more responsive to the needs of the world public. I believe that broad-based support for the United Nations depends on timely and effective communication and on result-oriented activities. In that regard, the United Nations has made considerable achievements in strengthening public outreach and in enhancing administrative efficiency. However, more work must be done to make better use of the Organization's resources and funds.

My delegation wishes to reiterate the commitment of the Republic of Korea to the strengthening of the work of the General Assembly. We believe that, under the able leadership of Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland, the fifty-fifth session, following the historic Millennium Summit, will prove to be the most productive one ever.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Secretary-General for the thoughts set out in his report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1), which, together with his millennium report (A/54/2000), will contribute to identifying the problems facing the international community as it enters the new millennium and in offering solutions to those problems.

Unfortunately, over this past year new conflicts have broken out. Wars, extreme poverty, natural and man-made disasters and the AIDS pandemic symbolize the suffering being endured.

The linkage between peace and poverty is becoming increasingly clear. As the Secretary-General points out to us, there is a visible link between thriving markets and human security, which requires, we believe, an approach based on greater solidarity that will provide the system with resources and will also promote a just and lasting development for all human beings. In addressing the Millennium Summit, the President of Argentina focused precisely on this issue.

We still have not given thought to the challenge the Secretary-General put before us last year about the limits to sovereignty and the need to respond to serious and massive human rights violations. The principle of non-intervention is fundamental to relations among States that are equal and sovereign. However, at the same time, Argentina believes a principle that would complement non-intervention must be added: the principle of non-indifference. This principle means, among other things, that those responsible for aberrant crimes cannot enjoy impunity and that we must actively pursue ways and means to prevent their occurrence.

Therefore, we welcome the establishment of the International Criminal Court and the tribunals for the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, convinced that their formidable deterrent power constitutes real, important and defined progress of the United Nations towards peace, national reconciliation and justice.

We must increase the protection of the civilian population affected by conflicts. The recommendations contained in the report submitted to the Security Council last September continue to be fully valid and the resolutions adopted by the Council represent important strides in that direction.

United Nations officials and humanitarian personnel continue to experience very serious attacks. We pay our tribute to those who recently lost their lives. Argentina is very active in this arena, and when we presided over the Security Council last February, we organized an open debate on this matter. We look forward with interest to the proposals that the Secretary-General will make on the scope of application of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. We call upon those countries that receive this report to sign and ratify its text and for the international community to firmly confront this problem.

With regard to Security Council reform, my country believes that the reform must be wide-ranging and comprise all its aspects in order to make it more democratic, transparent and effective. My country believes that expansion of the membership must be made only by non-permanent members in order not to create new privileges in addition to those already in existence.

The consensus-achieving body required for that reform to be legitimate must be, in our view, the Open-ended Working Group that is open to all members of this Organization.

The reception by Member States of the Brahimi report demonstrates the broadly shared recognition of the importance of peacekeeping operations, the shortcomings of the system and the need to adopt urgent measures to revitalize it.

This moment in political life must be seized to advance towards the implementation of its recommendations. Success of the implementation of the Brahimi report is rooted in the will of Members States, which, on one hand, should be translated into the decision to provide the Organization the necessary human and financial resources, and, secondly, to assume risks inherent in peacekeeping missions. Without the genuine commitment of its members, the United Nations will not be able to maintain international peace and security.

The report is a valuable contribution to maximizing the system. We urge States to analyse their recommendations in the General Assembly, as well as in the Security Council, and to not delay the implementation of measures that, without doubt, will strengthen United Nations peacekeeping capacity.

This year's report also reflects the effort of the United Nations to alleviate the multifaceted aspects of humanitarian emergencies that are exacerbated by the devastating dimensions of natural disasters and the terrible suffering of civil populations and humanitarian personnel in countless conflicts.

This report demonstrates that United Nations action system-wide is being impeded by financial and political limitations. In the financial realm, the decline in contributions in response to inter-agency consolidated appeals is alarming. In the political realm, the inadequate capacity and readiness to cooperate with the affected authorities or clashing groups is concerning.

As a non-permanent Security Council member, Argentina has been closely following the unfolding of a vast number of humanitarian emergencies, examining the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons. We support the tireless work carried out by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Mrs. Ogata, who, with her energy and creativity, has stepped up the work of her office to reach increasingly more individuals.

We must stop and think even more about the internally displaced persons that live in extreme conditions, often lacking assistance and protection. We must support the States that are going through these processes, particularly the most extreme cases, so they can provide these citizens with assistance and basic social services as long as they are displaced and so that they can create conditions for their safe and dignified return.

We must emphasize that actions being taken by the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies must be focused on individuals and on protecting and defending the values and the property of individuals affected by crises and conflicts.

The United Nations has contributed to broadening the agenda of issues now being discussed at international forums, especially the Bretton Woods institutions. Greater interaction between the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund is central to discussing new strategies that will factor in the dichotomy seen in various developing countries between globalization and poverty eradication.

Bringing Governments together with actors of civil society strengthens the capability for development. We highlight here the "Global Compact" initiative, which links corporations, trade unions and civil organizations with the daily work of the United Nations system as a way of complementing Governments' actions and generating certainty for the business sector in those countries that require the capital flows and investment for their economic growth.

We must also point to the creation of a volunteer corps to assist those countries that are most isolated from information technology and to work to integrate the most backward areas into the global information highway.

While the Secretary-General has identified the drop in official development aid as one of the main obstacles to be overcome in fighting poverty, he has also called upon the States themselves to become involved, ensuring good governance, responsible public administration and the state of law.

We must implement the policies, programmes and projects recommended as a result of the review processes relating to the world summits on women and on social development. Argentina has taken upon itself the relevant commitments, and is promoting the adoption of specific policies to deal with poverty, the elderly, pregnant and nursing mothers and their children and those infected with the HIV virus or who are sick with AIDS.

We welcome the resolution on good governance adopted by the Commission on Human Rights. This is an issue of particular interest to our country because it goes to the very heart of the social compact between those governing and the governed, the nature of democracy and the real existence of a state of law. A transparent government that does account for what it does is a guarantee for respect for human rights.

We also hail the appointment of special rapporteurs for housing and food, as well as of the special representative for human rights defenders. These competencies extended to the special rapporteurs

further the advancement and protection of all human rights, both civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural.

Unfortunately, these rights are still being trampled upon. There has been a further increase in sex trafficking and the economic exploitation of women and children. We see continuing discrimination against migrants and indigenous peoples, and racist and xenophobic acts. There is, however, a series of major initiatives under way, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recently created by the Economic and Social Council, the upcoming World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We hope that these steps will lead to an ever-clearer awareness in the international community as to the need to put an end to these human rights violations and to prosecute and punish those responsible, thus contributing to a more just and peaceful world.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) *(spoke in Spanish)*: In the report under consideration, for which we are deeply obliged to the Secretary-General, we see a fact confirmed, one of which we were all aware to some extent: the fact that, whenever the United Nations failed in its efforts to secure or to keep the peace and to prevent massive human rights violations, this occurred neither for lack of means nor for any structural flaws inherent in the Organization, but rather because of deficiencies or shortcomings in the human management of the instruments available to the international community to respond to such crises.

In paragraph 7 of his report, the Secretary-General lists the causes behind those failures. The nature of those failures necessarily determines the nature of the means to remedy them. Lack of political will can be remedied only where there is political will. Lack of resources can be remedied only by providing resources. Inappropriate mandates can be remedied only with appropriate ones.

That is why our delegation understands that what the Secretary-General calls "the dilemma of intervention" must be resolved not by resorting to unilateral intervention on the part of States or groups of States acting outside the United Nations, but rather by correcting errors that have frustrated effective action by the international community in the face of tragedies such as those of Srebrenica and Rwanda. We are entirely in agreement with the Secretary-General that we are talking about a problem of responsibility. In all circumstances in which massive human rights violations occur, we, the international community, are obliged to shoulder our responsibilities and to act accordingly. But that responsibility must be made effective through the United Nations, created precisely to act on behalf of all of us through collective action that is legitimate because it emanates from bodies that represent the entire international community.

In the past, interventions, even the well-intentioned ones, used to end up pursuing goals unrelated to humanitarian causes. Humanitarian intervention, designed to put an end to a situation where juridical norms and basic morality were being ignored, can itself end up being the root of situations of this kind, thus generating more problems than it solves. Collective action executed in consonance with the norms enshrined in the Charter has replaced and displaced unilateral interventions.

For these reasons, and without prejudice to the fact that in extreme cases dictated by actual developments we might be able to conceive of the possibility of resorting to humanitarian intervention, there must be no attempt to institutionalize it; nor must it be recognized as a suitable instrument to put an end to the perpetration of international crimes.

As regards peacekeeping operations, the report of the Panel of experts chaired by Ambassador Brahimi, could not have come at a better time. It provides an in-depth examination of these operations, revealing their insufficiencies and shortcomings. We must proceed as soon as possible to consider its recommendations so that we can translate immediately into reality those that appear to be appropriate. We are looking forward to the plan for implementing these recommendations, which the Secretary-General promised us at the opening of this session's general debate. Moreover, we hope that it takes into account other valuable reports on the issue that have recently been produced.

Never is it superfluous to stress the importance of the preventive aspects of the job of ensuring international peace and security. We have read with the keenest interest the information provided to us by the Secretary-General on measures adopted in the last few years to strengthen information and coordination

machinery linking our Organization to other international organizations, Member States and non-governmental organizations. We believe that it is absolutely necessary to strengthen the United Nations information and analytical services so that we can enable them to alert the Secretariat and other bodies of our Organization to situations that may erupt into crisis or conflict. The point is to raise these services to a level of high professionalism so that they can gather, analyse and interpret information in a way that would make it possible to foresee the emergence of trends and discern possible threats to peace and security and to warn of the imminence or possibility of domestic upheaval, institutional crises, human rights violations, border incidents and so forth. The Secretary-General has told us about the establishment of a prevention team in the Department of Political Affairs, and this marks an important step in that direction.

Another avenue to be explored is that of United Nations cooperation with regional organizations. My delegation realizes that we still have not made much progress in this arena. As the Secretary-General puts it, cooperation with some regional organizations has, in some instances, proved fruitful; but the effort for cooperation continues to be difficult in this arena, owing to a series of practical, political and organizational factors.

Our country is convinced that regional organizations of a political nature, such as the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity, carry an enormous potential that in some cases could be mined and made available for conflict prevention or peacekeeping operations. The regional organizations afford certain specific advantages. They are usually seen by Governments in any given region as more their own, and the assumption is that they are more familiar with the realities and problems of their member countries. It is to be hoped that tangible progress will be made along these lines at the high-level meeting announced by the Secretary-General between the United Nations and the regional organizations.

The institutional instruments that we rely on to do the task of ensuring international peace and security must be adapted to take a multidimensional and integrated approach, which the nature of contemporary problems requires. The Secretary-General rightly points out the growing complexity of peacekeeping operations, which require the performance of new functions and the use of civilian personnel trained in a broad range of disciplines. States' cooperation in this arena is becoming more necessary than ever. Uruguay would like to express its readiness to cooperate with the Secretariat and other bodies of our Organization in dealing with this issue.

Whenever we speak of international peace and security, we are ultimately referring to the peace and security of every society, every family and every individual. In the final analysis, the end goal and purpose of our cooperation activities is the human being — every living being within the society in which we live. From this truth flows the need to base cooperation on the concept of human security. As the Secretary-General reminds us in his report, human security and economic development go hand in hand.

The enormous job of promoting economic development must now be pursued in the context of globalization. It has already been pointed out that this phenomenon has two sides to it: on the one hand it generates prosperity, and on the other it accentuates the gap between the developed and the developing world.

While it is true that globalization is an inevitable phenomenon and that trying to oppose it would be like trying to oppose the law of gravity, it is nevertheless controllable and can be oriented and managed. The management of globalization to ensure that its benefits are distributed more equitably among all societies of the world must be undertaken on the basis of certain fundamental principles relating, inter alia, to international trade, the movement of capital, the regulation of work and environmental protection.

As a result, we cannot but agree with the Secretary-General when he asserts that, in order for globalization to be made more inclusive and equitable, we must create more effective global institutions. Among other things, we must adopt norms and measures to ensure that freedom of trade works in every direction for the benefit of all States, not only of those that, because of their greater economic development, are better equipped to compete.

Finally, I wish briefly to refer to an issue whose importance is growing day by day: that of information and communications technologies. The report stresses the need to enhance cooperation in this field so as to ensure the access of all to those new technologies. My delegation congratulates the Secretary-General on his initiatives to reduce the digital divide and encourages

the Secretariat and all components of the United Nations system to persevere towards that end.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): My delegation would like to commend the Secretary-General for producing yet another excellent document in his report on the work of the Organization. This report builds on the foundation laid in the Secretary-General's millennium report, which was well received and endorsed by the heads of State and Government who came to New York for the Millennium Summit. We appreciate the high level of reporting that the Secretary-General and his staff have continued to provide to members of this Assembly. We believe that these reports give direction on how we could improve or even change course, in order to make the United Nations of the twenty-first century a more effective and efficient Organization.

The heads of State and Government who spoke at the Millennium Summit emphasized several important points. They reconfirmed their support for and confidence in the work of the Secretary-General and his staff. They said that it is time for us to roll up our sleeves and to start implementing the resolutions that we have adopted over the years. The Summit left us with the spirit of the millennium, which calls on us to proceed with a sense of urgency and not at the pace of doing business as usual.

While the Summit focused a spotlight on many issues, in the view of our delegation the overriding theme that emerged in the plenary speeches and round-table debates was the urgent need to address poverty and underdevelopment. While reaffirming the role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security in the world, the heads of State and Government acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining global security in a world crippled by hunger, disease and abject poverty.

In fact, my delegation believes that, following the Millennium Summit, it is no longer possible to address questions of peace and security, globalization, poverty eradication and the like in isolation from each other. The work of the United Nations in the twenty-first century will have to be about getting closer to the lives of the people we serve. There can no longer be decisions taken that are not people-centred in their approach.

President Mbeki said it better in his plenary speech when he stated that

> "The fundamental challenge that faces this Millennium Summit is that, in a credible way, we must demonstrate the will to end poverty and underdevelopment ... We must demonstrate the will to succeed, such as was demonstrated by those who died in the titanic struggle against Nazism and fascism." *(A/55/PV.5)*

The Africans have defined the broad objectives of the African renaissance. First, we have concluded that the African renaissance means the establishment of democratic political systems, which will ensure the accomplishment of the goal that the people must govern. Second, the renaissance will make certain that these systems take into account African specifics so that, while being truly democratic and protecting human rights, they are nevertheless designed in ways which really ensure that political and peaceful means can be used to address the competing interests of different social groups in each country. Third, it will establish institutions and procedures which enable the continent to deal collectively with questions of democracy, peace and stability. Fourth, it will seek to achieve sustainable development that results in the continuous improvement of the standard of living and the quality of life of the masses of people. Fifth, it will qualitatively change Africa's place in the global economy so that it is free of the yoke of the international debt burden and no longer a mere supplier of raw materials and an importer of manufactured goods. Sixth, it will ensure the full emancipation of the women of Africa. Seven, it will successfully confront the scourge of infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Last, the renaissance is about protecting the environment of our continent and ensuring the sustainable use of our natural resources.

We are very much aware that the African renaissance is not an event, but a process. We have no illusions about the immense difficulties we face in meeting the challenges listed above. We will make progress, but we are also prepared for setbacks. Like the United Nations of the twenty-first century, our challenge is to tackle the priorities with a sense of urgency and not just to act as if we were engaged in business as usual.

My delegation firmly believes that, throughout the fifty-fifth session, which we prefer to call the Millennium Assembly, poverty and underdevelopment will remain the root causes of most of the issues which

come before us. This unshakeable reality will guide our delegation's participation throughout this session.

One of the things that has sharpened the inequalities between and within States is the phenomenon of globalization. We must accept that globalization is here to stay. It is indeed a reality. The only way to make globalization a positive force for all is to deal with its uneven impact. In April, the developing countries attending the South Summit in Havana, Cuba, spoke on the impact of globalization, including the growing "digital divide". This concern became one of the issues central to the dialogue between the South, represented by President Mbeki, Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, President Obasanjo, Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, and President Bouteflika, representing the Organization of African Unity (OAU); and the leaders of the Group of Eight industrialized countries, whose Summit was held in Japan.

They stressed that:

> "The countries of the South must be equitably represented in any forum deliberating and deciding on social, economic or political matters which can adversely or otherwise affect countries of the South."

In other words, if we are to put an end to the growing disparities between the developing and developed countries, there has to be a strengthening of the North-South dialogue. Hence we welcome the channels of communication that have now been established at the highest level between the North and the South through the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), with the Group of Eight industrialized countries and the European Union.

In the pursuit of poverty eradication and development, our delegation fully supports the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, and we look forward to speeding up its implementation. A critical element of this Initiative is the need for more resources to be made available at a fast pace. We believe, however, that ways need to be explored to further broaden the scope and enhance the depth of debt relief. In our view, it is equally important to make serious progress on the issue of official development assistance and foreign direct investment flows.

In this context, South Africa places a high priority on the successful outcome of the High-level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, to be held in 2001. This conference could become a test of our collective political will to make decisions that will improve the lives of those who suffer the most. It should nevertheless be understood that developed countries carry a special responsibility in this regard.

One of the cornerstones of our objective in struggling for socio-economic development, democratization and good governance is to achieve security and stability on the continent. This cannot be accomplished without combating the proliferation and the excessive accumulation of conventional arms, in particular small arms and light weapons, and their illicit trafficking.

We welcome the Millennium Declaration, which addressed both the proliferation of small arms and the need to totally ban landmines and other anti-personnel mines, which continue to take the lives of innocent people in our country. We hope that the 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will offer the international community yet another opportunity to reaffirm its commitment on this issue in a multifaceted manner that takes account of security, humanitarian and development issues.

Once again, we welcome the report of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations, also known as the Brahimi report, which contains some important conclusions on which Member States can build to reach the objective of an effective United Nations.

My delegation deplores the continuing wave of attacks on, and killings of, humanitarian personnel. We support efforts to improve protection for such personnel and the need to prosecute the perpetrators of these crimes.

A separate but related topic is the important matter of humanitarian intervention. My delegation seriously hopes that this issue will be discussed during this session.

South Africa has in the past consistently called for the democratization of multilateral institutions. Our delegation sincerely hopes that the Millennium Summit will inject new energy and political will into this process. The Security Council needs urgent reform in

order to make it more representative, effective and credible. Of particular importance to our delegation is the need for the Council to reflect current realities and for the representation of developing countries to be increased. We shall continue to work constructively in the Open-ended Working Group on Council reform to achieve these objectives.

We should like to reiterate that the Bretton Woods institutions are equally in need of urgent reform in order to discharge their mandate and respond to the new development challenges. We believe that the United Nations of the twenty-first century will have a much harder time meeting the challenges before us if we cannot find a way to bring the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization into a closer working relationship with the United Nations. The challenges of the future demand collective action and coordination.

Perhaps one of the more contentious issues on the agenda of this session is the proposed review of the United Nations scale of assessments. It is our intention to approach this matter with an open mind, always making sure that the best interests of the United Nations are not compromised. South Africa looks forward to being moved from category B to category C on the peacekeeping scale of assessments during this fifty-fifth session. We are thankful to those Members that have committed themselves to helping us achieve this goal. We count on the support of the rest of the Member States in this matter.

It gives us great pleasure to reaffirm today that our Government would be honoured to host the 2002 Earth Summit in South Africa. We believe that the 10-year review Summit should reinvigorate the global community's support for sustainable development by serving the interests of both developing and developed countries. The Summit should focus in a holistic manner on the integration of environment and development towards the full implementation of Agenda 21. Hosting the Summit on the African continent would provide the people of Africa with an opportunity to take ownership of the principles of Agenda 21 and the objectives and ideals of sustainable development. Furthermore, it would enhance the concept of the African century and give impetus to the African renaissance by highlighting Africa's concerns and aspirations related to sustainable development.

Since 1994, when South Africa was readmitted to the United Nations, we have worked very hard to maintain support for, and the dignity of, this Organization. So it is with a deep sense of our recent history as a nation that South Africa is in the process of arranging for the hosting of the World Conference on Racism and Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance less than a year from now. Having suffered under the cruel system of apartheid, my people, both black and white, feel very strongly about this Conference and look forward to sharing their vision of the future. We look forward to receiving everyone with the warmth and kindness that our continent is well-known for.

Mr. Nesho (Albania): First, I would like to extend our greetings to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization and to express the deep appreciation of my Government for the activities undertaken by the United Nations since the previous session of the General Assembly.

I should like now to refer to particular aspects of the report. I take this opportunity to touch upon the role of the United Nations in the peacekeeping and peace-building operations in Kosovo, eloquently described in the Brahimi report. The Albanian Government has welcomed and supported the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as well as the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Kouchner. We consider that UNMIK has brought about positive changes in Kosovo in the areas of administration, humanitarian assistance and the building of democratic institutions. This activity was conducted in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). I also applaud the important work of the international military presence, the Kosovo Force, and of the civilian police in Kosovo, which has provided a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo and for the international civil presence there.

We extend our thanks to the specialized agencies of the United Nations — the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and so forth — for their invaluable work and the assistance given during the emergency, not only to Kosovo, but also to the neighbouring countries. At the same time, it

is important that these United Nations bodies increase their efforts and cooperation with the international community to establish normal living conditions to prepare for the return of more than 200,000 refugees presently living in other European countries.

Furthermore, the worrisome situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the potential influx of refugees requires that these humanitarian agencies prepare emergency plans to deal with the possible humanitarian consequences.

Regarding the continuing inter-ethnic violence in Kosovo — referred to in paragraph 145 of the Secretary-General's report, where the Kosovar Albanians are assigned the primary responsibility for this violence — I would like to make the following remarks. The Albanian Government has stated that it supports a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo and has condemned the acts of violence. However, we should not forget that the roots of such violence are to be found in the Serb genocide and "ethnic-cleansing" committed against the Kosovar Albanians. This genocide was characterized by the killings of thousands of Albanians, horrendous massacres, mass graves, "ethnic-cleansing" and burned houses. The Kosovar Albanians want a peaceful and democratic Kosovo, while the Milosevic regime is always trying to destabilize the situation by generating violence inside Kosovo and jeopardizing the UNMIK objectives.

We hope that the recent presidential and parliamentarian elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) will bring to an end the criminal Milosevic regime and open up new ways of cooperation and understanding among the Balkan countries.

Ms. Ibraimova (Kyrgyzstan): The delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic is grateful to the Secretary-General for his very comprehensive, thoughtful and informative report. It gives us a good overview of the work of our Organization. Reading the report, I was thinking that the Member States of our Organization have achieved a great deal in laying the foundations for the further development of our common world. Of course, much remains to be done, and this report presents for consideration what still needs to be done.

Regarding peace and security issues, the view of the Secretary-General that sustainable peace and security for all countries remains a central objective of the United Nations is shared by the people of Kyrgyzstan. The report (A/55/305) of the Panel led by Mr. Brahimi contains many interesting ideas that should be developed and elaborated into the future programme of United Nations activities in this field. My delegation supports the concept of conflict prevention and of moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. We welcome the establishment of a Prevention Team within the Department of Political Affairs. We believe that early identification of possible grave conflicts should help the world avoid them. We fully agree that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be strengthened by additional human resources.

We welcome the outcome of the year 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and urge all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to follow up on the commitments they made at the Conference.

World security is threatened not only by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but by the harmful effects of armed conflicts — including international terrorism, drug smuggling and illicit trafficking in small arms — which are not confined within the national borders of any one country.

Kyrgyzstan today faces a drug trafficking problem which has threatened to severely undermine its national security. According to the analysis of World Health Organization experts in Kyrgyzstan, 75 per cent of the drug addicts are under 30 years old. In spite of the energetic measures taken by the Kyrgyz Government, the number of drug-related deaths had increased fourfold by this year. This means that the threat of drug abuse and drug trafficking has not been overcome. In this regard, we will welcome and actively support the efforts of the international community aimed at eliminating this evil.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme for its close collaboration on this issue. Kyrgyzstan will support and contribute to strengthening the global consensus on combating illicit drug trafficking. I also join others in supporting the proposal to hold an international conference in 2001 to address the issue of small arms proliferation.

As regards meeting humanitarian commitments, if peace and security is the central objective of the United

Nations, humanitarian assistance is the most challenging and noble activity that it undertakes. Millions of people who are being helped by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and by United Nations humanitarian agencies trust in the United Nations as a friend in need. We believe that people's trust is the most important indicator of the effectiveness of our Organization.

We strongly believe that the international efforts to eradicate HIV/AIDS, which has become a major problem for entire regions of the world, should be strengthened. My delegation co-sponsored the draft resolution on this issue and has a strong commitment to providing all possible support to the activities in this field. We support the idea of holding, on an urgent basis, a special session to review the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects.

I turn to the subject of cooperating for development. The part of the Secretary-General's report concerning the elimination of poverty worldwide touches on the most important development goals of the United Nations. As regards the United Nations activities, I commend the group chaired by the United Nations Development Programme to prepare a proposal for a system-wide poverty-reduction strategy. We believe that eliminating the gap between the developed countries, on the one hand, and the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, on the other, involves inter alia establishing a fair mechanism so that the developing countries and the countries with economies in transition can participate efficiently in the international trade and economic system.

Kyrgyzstan anticipates a positive outcome of the preparations for the Rio + 10 conference in 2002. The conference will provide an important opportunity to assess the status of the progress achieved in meeting the goals established by the 1992 Earth Summit, where Governments took a historic step towards ensuring the future of the planet, adopting a comprehensive plan for global action in all areas relating to sustainable development.

As the Assembly is aware, 2002 has also been proclaimed the International Year of Mountains. Mountains are a source of hope; their multiplicity of functions makes them an obvious focal point of human concern. The Year gives us an opportunity to ensure the present and future well-being of mountain communities by promoting conservation and sustainable development in mountain areas; to increase awareness and knowledge of mountain ecosystems, their dynamics and functioning, and their overriding importance in providing a number of strategic goods and services essential to the well-being of both rural and urban, highland and lowland, people, particularly water supply and food security; to promote and defend the cultural heritage of mountain communities; and to pay attention to frequent conflicts in mountain areas and promote peacemaking in those regions.

Kyrgyzstan appreciates the work already undertaken to achieve sustainable mountain development by States and by organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization, and non-governmental organizations. We appreciate the commitment of the Government of Switzerland, particularly the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, to raising public awareness in this field, and the commitment of non-governmental organizations, in particular the Mountain Forum of the United States and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development of Nepal, scientists, researchers and mass media from all countries. They all contribute to making the International Year of Mountains the year of hope, the year of the future and the year of our life.

The end of the International Year of Mountains should be the beginning of the consistent and forward-looking development of mountain regions. We believe that it is vitally important to adopt a new approach to the understanding of mountain regions and to change public awareness.

In conclusion, I reiterate our commitment to work very closely with the President, to achieve our common goal of the success of the fifty-fifth session.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman): At the outset I express on behalf of my delegation our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, for his annual report on the work of the Organization, an important report that deserves the attention of the Assembly.

We share the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the turn of the millennium provides a unique vantage point from which to view the progress achieved and the challenges that lie ahead. The Millennium Summit, which was held at the beginning of this month, was an opportunity to exchange views

on these issues and to seek solutions to the common challenges that face humanity.

Regarding the question of humanitarian intervention, we believe the Secretary-General was right when he pointed out that there would be strong reactions by Member States on this issue. We emphasize that the focus of the Organization should and must remain within the confines and mandates specified by the United Nations Charter.

The sanctions regime is another issue that received greater attention during the Millennium Summit. Despite the fact that the sanctions regime was intended as a political mechanism to guarantee that Governments would implement their commitments in accordance with United Nations resolutions, this mechanism has now become a weapon that has harmed the basic rights of societies, which undoubtedly contradicts the letter and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We endorse the call on the Security Council to adopt new policies and effective mechanisms to relieve the suffering imposed on States and people. The Security Council, with its responsibilities defined by the Charter, should without doubt play a positive and unifying role to maintain international peace and stability.

It remains to be said that the greatest challenge facing the Organization today is to maintain international peace and security. In this regard, we commend the work of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Ambassador Brahimi for its comprehensive report (A/55/305) and bold recommendations. We are of the view that the report deserves serious and urgent attention from Member States. We cannot but emphasize the need for consensus on this issue and the need to avoid stretching the capabilities of the Organization beyond its intended capacity, where it might become party to conflicts. We also believe that the United Nations should strictly adhere to the provisions of the Charter within a clear and concise mandate, with the full acceptance of the parties involved in conflicts.

The reform of the United Nations and its organs remains a lofty goal and a high endeavour which continues to receive complete support from my delegation. We should review the expansion of Security Council membership to reflect a fair representation and the changes that have occurred in the world since 1945.

In recent years globalization has become an unavoidable force. While it brings benefits to certain societies in the developed world, it has had, on the other hand, a negative impact on others in the developing countries. Therefore, we call on the international community, and especially on the developed countries, to take into account the concerns of the developing countries, with the aim of narrowing the economic and technological gap.

In the same vein, we support the Secretary-General's call to tackle the challenges facing Africa and the least developed countries: the eradication of poverty, the improvement of health standards and education, and the combating of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, all of which necessitate a collaborative effort by all Members of the United Nations. In this regard, we call on the international community to spare no effort to help the African countries and the least developed countries to face the challenges. Measures to be taken should include the relief of debt.

In conclusion, we believe that the time has come for all of us to work together to further the lofty goals and aspirations that we all have. Indeed, the turn of the millennium has given us the opportunity to revamp the United Nations and to bring it to a level that could meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this agenda item.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 10.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Second report of the General Committee
(A/55/250/Add.1)

The Acting President: I should like to draw attention to the second report of the General Committee (A/55/250/Add.1), concerning a request by Equatorial Guinea for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central

African States", and a request contained in a letter dated 25 September 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations.

In paragraph 1 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States" should be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in the agenda of the current session?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional item should be considered directly in plenary meeting. May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: In paragraph 2 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that agenda item 105, "Crime prevention and criminal justice", should also be considered directly in plenary meeting for the sole purpose of taking action on the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the draft protocols thereto.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider agenda item 105 directly in plenary meeting for the sole purpose of taking action on the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the draft protocols thereto?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I would like to announce some additions to the programme of work of the General Assembly. I should like to inform Members that on Tuesday morning, 12 October 2000, the General Assembly will take up agenda item 15 (b), entitled "Elections of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council". Furthermore, on Friday morning, 20 October 2000, the General Assembly will take up agenda item 170, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe". On Wednesday morning, 25 October 2000, the Assembly will then take up as the third item agenda item 174, entitled: "The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order". This information will be reflected in an addendum to document A/INF/55/3 and will be issued next week. The list of speakers for item 170 and 174 are now open.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.32

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

32nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 10 October 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency The Honourable Roosevelt Douglas, late Prime Minister of Dominica

The President: It is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of the late Prime Minister of Dominica, His Excellency The Honourable Roosevelt Douglas, who passed away on 1 October 2000.

He was a prominent political leader in Dominica and had been its Prime Minister since February of this year. It was only last month that the General Assembly heard his statements at the Millennium Summit and in the general debate.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of Dominica to convey our condolences to the Government and people of Dominica and to the bereaved family of His Excellency The Honourable Roosevelt Douglas.

I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency The Honourable Roosevelt Douglas.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Dominica.

Mr. Richards (Dominica): Mr. President, I wish to thank you and the members of your staff for arranging this tribute to The Honourable Roosevelt Douglas, the late Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica. On behalf of the Douglas family and the Government and people of Dominica, I would also like to use this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to those from whom we have received words of comfort and expressions of sympathy at this moment of sadness for all Dominicans.

Honourable Roosevelt Douglas was born in Portsmouth, Dominica, on 15 October 1941. The second son of a relatively prosperous family, "Rosie", as he was popularly known throughout the Caribbean, demonstrated at an early age a willingness to assist the less fortunate, and that caring and generous spirit shaped his character and outlook.

After completing his secondary education, Honourable Roosevelt Douglas left Dominica in 1961 to pursue studies in agriculture at the University of Guelph in Canada. Upon graduation from Guelph, the young Roosevelt Douglas changed course and courses, proceeding to study political science at McGill University. That he should choose politics over agriculture is not surprising; both his father and his older brother, Michael, had been successful politicians and Members of Parliament before him. But his political journey began in inauspicious circumstances, and he was destined to go down a political path not travelled by either his father or brother.

The late Honourable Roosevelt Douglas was pursuing doctoral studies in political science when the turbulent events of the 1960s and his life experiences

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in Canada impelled him to take an uncompromising stand against racism and the discrimination and indignity associated with it. As a consequence, his studies came to an end. On his return to Dominica in 1976, he immediately immersed himself in local politics and joined forces with those campaigning for independence from Britain.

The late Roosevelt Douglas was elected to the Dominica Parliament for the first time in 1985. From 1982 until his death, he was the leader of the Labour Party of Dominica, and from 1996 to 1999 he served as Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. On 4 February 2000 Honourable Roosevelt Douglas was sworn in as the fifth Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Throughout his adult life Roosevelt Douglas had a singular passionate commitment to the struggle for the liberation of black people everywhere and for the economic and political empowerment of the poor and disadvantaged. Driven by that commitment and his concern for social and economic justice, he became involved in the 1980s and 1990s in international solidarity work in various parts of the world. In southern Africa, in particular, he played an important role in support of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the African National Congress (ANC) in the struggle against apartheid. During that period he also established significant relationships with other Labour Parties and Governments in Europe. In the course of his brief stewardship as Prime Minister of Dominica, he promoted those relationships as building blocks of a new cooperative effort to develop relationships with Europe.

Never a politician in the conventional mould, the late Prime Minister energized the political debate in his own country and in the Caribbean by frequently expressing views and advocating positions considered politically unwise by some. In his quest for dignity, respect and better economic conditions for the less privileged, the Prime Minister would not allow himself to be distracted by criticism at home or abroad.

Not everyone shared his vision of a humane and just society and the mechanisms for achieving that goal. But, if the late Prime Minister were to speak to this Assembly today, I think he would feel very comfortable with the following quotation from George Bernard Shaw:

> "You see things; and you say, 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say, 'Why not?'"

The legacy of Roosevelt Bernard Douglas is that he dared to ask "why not", and in so doing touched in a fundamental way the lives of many people in Dominica, the Caribbean and elsewhere.

Honourable Roosevelt Douglas passed on suddenly and untimely on Sunday, 1 October 2000 at his residence in Portsmouth, Dominica. The Commonwealth of Dominica has lost one of its illustrious sons, a consistent fighter for freedom and social and economic justice, a man whose vision, engaging personality, sense of humour and ability to communicate with people at all levels made him one of the Caribbean's leading political figures.

While the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica mourn his loss, we are thankful for the 58 years he spent among us.

Programme of work

The President: I would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/55/3/Add.1, which covers the period 10 October through 30 November, and which has already been circulated to Member States.

Other than the items already cited in the previous programme of work, the lists of speakers for additional items mentioned in document A/INF/55/3/Add.1 are open.

The General Assembly will, in due course, be kept informed of the dates for the consideration of other agenda items, as well as of any additions or changes.

Organization of work

The President: I should now like to make an announcement concerning agenda item 20, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance".

I have requested Mr. Hubert Wurth, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations, to be coordinator of the informal consultations on the draft resolutions under agenda item 20 and he has graciously accepted.

May I request those delegations intending to submit draft resolutions under agenda item 20 to do so as early as possible in order to allow time, if need be, for negotiations with a view to reaching consensus on the draft resolutions.

In this connection, I should like to inform members that the first meeting of the informal consultations will be held on Wednesday, 25 October at 3 p.m. in conference room 8.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/55/345/Add.6, Add.7 and Add.8)

The President: In the letters contained in documents A/55/345/Add.6, A/55/345/Add.7 and A/55/345/Add.8, the Secretary-General informs the President that, since the issuance of his communications contained in document A/55/345 and addenda 1 to 5, Dominica, Chad and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, respectively, have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in documents A/55/345/Add.6, A/55/345/Add.7 and A/55/345/Add.8?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 15

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(a) Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2000.

The five outgoing non-permanent members are the following: Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands. Those five States cannot be re-elected and therefore their names should not appear on the ballot papers.

Apart from the five permanent members, the Security Council will include in 2001 the following States: Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mali, Tunisia and Ukraine. The names of those States, therefore, should also not appear on the ballot papers.

Of the five non-permanent members which will remain in office in 2001, three are from Africa and Asia, one is from Eastern Europe and one is from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Consequently, pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII) of 17 December 1963, the five non-permanent members should be elected according to the following pattern: two from Africa and Asia, one from Latin America and the Caribbean and two from among the Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect this pattern.

In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that, of the two States to be elected from Africa and Asia, one should be from Africa and one from Asia.

I should like to inform the Assembly that those candidates, their number not exceeding the number of seats to be filled, who receive the greatest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting will be declared elected.

In the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates which have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The President: In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

Regarding candidatures for the two vacant seats from among the African and Asian States, the Chairman of the Group of Asian States has informed the Secretariat that the Group has endorsed Singapore.

The Chairman of the Group of African States has informed the Secretariat that the Group has endorsed the Sudan. However, in this connection, the following communications have been circulated as official documents of the General Assembly: documents A/55/457 and A/55/463. In addition, in document A/55/464, the Permanent Representative of Mauritius presents the candidature of Mauritius as well.

Regarding the candidature for the vacant seat from among the Latin America and the Caribbean States, the Chairman of the Group has informed the Secretariat that the Group has endorsed Colombia.

Regarding candidatures for the two vacant seats from among the Western European and Other States, the Chairman of the Group has informed the Secretariat that there are three candidates: Ireland, Italy and Norway.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall proceed now to the election by secret ballot.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B" and "C" will now be distributed.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed and to write on them the names of the five States for which they wish to vote.

A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. Names of Members States on a ballot paper that do not belong to that region will not be counted.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pokaz (Croatia), Mr. Kitagawa (Japan) and Mr. Parrales Sánchez (Nicaragua) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 10.35 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — African and Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*173*
Abstentions:	*1*
Number of members voting:	*172*
Required two-thirds majority:	*115*
Number of votes obtained:	
Singapore	*168*
Mauritius	*95*
Sudan	*69*

Group B — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*173*
Abstentions:	*5*
Number of members voting:	*168*
Required two-thirds majority:	*112*
Number of votes obtained:	
Colombia	*168*

Group C — Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*173*
Abstentions:	*0*
Number of members voting:	*173*
Required two-thirds majority:	*116*
Number of votes obtained:	
Ireland	*130*
Norway	*114*
Italy	*94*

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, the following States were elected members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning 1 January 2001: Colombia, Ireland and Singapore.

The President: I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the Security Council.

There remain two seats to be filled, one from among the African and Asian States, and one from among the Western European and other States. In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that of the two seats allocated to the African and Asian States, one should be filled from Africa and one from Asia. As Singapore has already been elected, the remaining seat from among the African and Asian States should be filled by an African State.

We shall therefore proceed to the first restricted ballot.

The second round of balloting shall be restricted to the Two States from among the African States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely, Mauritius and the

Sudan, and to those two States from among the Western European and other States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely, Italy and Norway. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A" and "C" will now be distributed.

May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers marked "A", for the African and Asian States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote, and to write on the ballot papers marked "C", for the Western European and other States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked "A" will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Mauritius or the Sudan, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked "C" will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Italy or Norway, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pokaz (Croatia), Mr. Kitagawa (Japan) and Mr. Parrales Sánchez (Nicaragua) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 11.50 a.m. and resumed at 12.25 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — African and Asian States

Number of ballot papers	*173*
Number of invalid ballots	*0*
Number of valid ballots	*173*
Abstentions	*6*
Number of members voting	*167*
Required two-thirds majority	*112*
Number of votes obtained	
Mauritius	*102*
Sudan	*65*

Group C — Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers	*173*
Number of invalid ballots	*1*
Number of valid ballots	*172*
Abstentions	*2*
Number of members voting	*170*
Required two-thirds majority	*114*
Number of votes obtained	
Norway	*100*
Italy	*70*

The President: Since no candidates obtained the required two-thirds majority, there remain two seats to be filled: one from among the African and Asian States and one from among the Western European and other States.

In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that of the two seats allocated to the African and Asian States one should be filled from Africa and one from Asia. As Singapore has already been elected, the remaining seat from among the African and Asian States should be filled by one African State.

We shall therefore proceed to the second restricted ballot.

The third round of balloting shall be restricted to those two States from among the African States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely, Mauritius and the Sudan; and those two States from among the Western European and other States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely, Italy and Norway. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A" and "C" will now be distributed.

I request representatives to write on the ballot papers marked "A", for the African and Asian States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote, and to write on the ballot papers marked "C", for the Western European and other States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked "A" will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Mauritius or the Sudan, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked "C" will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Italy or Norway, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pokaz (Croatia), Mr. Kitagawa (Japan) and Mr. Parrales Sánchez (Nicaragua) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 12.40 p.m. and resumed at 1.20 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — African and Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*1*
Number of valid ballots:	*172*
Abstentions:	*4*
Number of members voting:	*168*
Required two-thirds majority:	*112*
Number of votes obtained:	
Mauritius	*110*
Sudan	*58*

Group C — Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*173*
Abstentions:	*1*
Number of members voting:	*172*
Required two-thirds majority:	*115*
Number of votes obtained:	
Norway	*110*
Italy	*62*

The President: Since again no candidate obtained the required two-thirds majority, there remain two seats to be filled, one from among the African and Asian States, and one from among the Western European and other States.

In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that of the two seats allocated to the African and Asian States one should be filled from Africa and one from Asia. As Singapore has already been elected, the remaining seat from among the African and Asian States should be filled by one African State.

We shall therefore proceed to the third restricted ballot.

The fourth round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the African States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Mauritius and the Sudan, and to the two States from among the Western European and other States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Italy and Norway. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

I request that representatives remain in their seats during the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A" and "C" will now be distributed. May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers marked "A", for the African and Asian States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote, and to write on the ballot papers marked "C", for the Western European and other States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked "A" will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Mauritius or the Sudan, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked "C" will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Italy or Norway, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pokaz (Croatia), Mr. Kitagawa (Japan) and Mr. Parrales Sánchez (Nicaragua) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 1.35 p.m. and resumed at 1.55 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — African and Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*173*
Abstentions:	*5*
Number of members voting:	*168*
Required two-thirds majority:	*112*
Number of votes obtained:	
Mauritius	*113*
Sudan	*55*

Group C — Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	*173*
Number of invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*173*
Abstentions:	*1*

Number of members voting 172
Required two-thirds majority 115
Number of votes obtained
Norway 115
Italy 57

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Mauritius and Norway were elected members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning 1 January 2001.

The President: I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the Security Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

The following five States have thus been elected members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning 1 January 2001: Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 15.

The meeting rose at 2 p.m.